THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS
Chantable English version with tropes
by Len Fellman July 27, 2020

CHAPTER 1

1:1 How | she sits alone
the city once full of people.
[She has become] like a widow,
the greatest[among the nations],
the princess among the provinces.
She is reduced to slavery.

א 1 אֵיכָה | יָשְׁבָה בָדָד הָעִיר
רַבָּתִי עָם הָיְתָה כְּאַלְמָנָה
רַבָּתִי בַגּוֹיִם שָׂרָתִי בַּמְּדִינוֹת
הָיְתָה לָמַס׃

2 She weeps bitterly [in the night].
Her tears [run down her cheeks].
There is none to comfort her
[from all her lovers].
Her companions[have all betrayed her];
they have become her enemies.

ב 2 בָּכוֹ תִבְכֶּה בַלָּיְלָה וְדִמְעָתָהּ
עַל לֶחֱיָהּ אֵין־לָהּ מְנַחֵם
מִכָּל־אֹהֲבֶיהָ כָּל־רֵעֶיהָ
בָּגְדוּ בָהּ הָיוּ לָהּ לְאוֹיְבִים׃

3 Judah is exiled in affliction
[and by hard labor].
She[sits among]the nations
but she finds there no relief.
All her pursuers overtook her
in her dire straits.

ג 3 גָּלְתָה יְהוּדָה מֵעֹנִי וּמֵרֹב
עֲבֹדָה הִוא יָשְׁבָה בַגּוֹיִם לֹא
מָצְאָה מָנוֹחַ כָּל־רֹדְפֶיהָ
הִשִּׂיגוּהָ בֵּין הַמְּצָרִים׃

1:4 The roads to Zion are mourning
for want of festival pilgrims.
All her gateways are deserted.
Her priests are groaning.
Her maidens are afflicted;
she is embittered.

ד 4 דַּרְכֵי צִיּוֹן אֲבֵלוֹת מִבְּלִי בָּאֵי
מוֹעֵד כָּל־שְׁעָרֶיהָ שׁוֹמֵמִין
כְּהֲנֶיהָ נֶאֱנָחִים בְּתוּלֹתֶיהָ
נוּגוֹת וְהִיא מַר־לָהּ׃

5 Her oppressors
have become her master;
her enemies prosper.
Since God has aggrieved her
for the greatness of her sins.
[Her young children]
have left her as prisoners
before the oppressor.

ה 5 הָיוּ צָרֶיהָ לְרֹאשׁ אֹיְבֶיהָ שָׁלוּ
כִּי־יְהוָה הוֹגָהּ עַל־רֹב
פְּשָׁעֶיהָ עוֹלָלֶיהָ הָלְכוּ שְׁבִי
לִפְנֵי צָר׃

6 Gone from the daughter of Zion
[is all her splendor]. Even[her leaders]
[have become like deer]
that find no pasture,
that flee without strength
before their pursuer.

ו 6 וַיֵּצֵא מִן־בַּת־צִיּוֹן כָּל־
הֲדָרָהּ הָיוּ שָׂרֶיהָ כְּאַיָּלִים
לֹא־מָצְאוּ מִרְעֶה וַיֵּלְכוּ
בְלֹא־כֹחַ לִפְנֵי רוֹדֵף׃

1:7 Jerusalem remembers
her days of misery[and her roaming];
All[of the treasures]
that were hers in the days of old
[when her people]fell
[into the hand of the enemy],
and there was none [to help her].
The oppressor[did gaze at her]
and laughed at her downfall.

ז 7 זָכְרָה יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם יְמֵי עָנְיָהּ
וּמְרוּדֶיהָ כֹּל מַחֲמֻדֶּיהָ אֲשֶׁר
הָיוּ מִימֵי קֶדֶם בִּנְפֹל עַמָּהּ
בְּיַד־צָר וְאֵין עוֹזֵר לָהּ רָאוּהָ
צָרִים שָׂחֲקוּ עַל־מִשְׁבַּתֶּהָ׃

8 Jerusalem has sinned very grievously.
Therefore[she has become]an outcast.
[All who honored her] [now despise her],
[for they have seen]her nakedness.
And she herself sighs, and turns away.

ח 8 חֵטְא חָטְאָה יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם עַל־כֵּן
לְנִידָה הָיָתָה כָּל־מְכַבְּדֶיהָ
הִזִּילוּהָ כִּי־רָאוּ עֶרְוָתָהּ גַּם־
הִיא נֶאֶנְחָה וַתָּשָׁב אָחוֹר׃

9 Her uncleanness[clings to her skirts].
She never thought
[this would be her end].
She descended[amazingly low].
There is no one [to comfort her].
Behold, Adonai, my affliction,
because the enemy is triumphant.

ט 9 טֻמְאָתָהּ בְּשׁוּלֶיהָ לֹא זָכְרָה
אַחֲרִיתָהּ וַתֵּרֶד פְּלָאִים אֵין
מְנַחֵם לָהּ רְאֵה יְהוָה אֶת־
עָנְיִי כִּי הִגְדִּיל אוֹיֵב׃

1:10 The oppressor
has spread out his hand
over everything[that she treasured].
[For she saw]the nations
invade[her holy place],
whom[You had forbidden]
to attend Your assembly.

י 10 יָדָו֙ פָּרַ֣שׂ צָ֔ר עַ֖ל כָּל־
מַחֲמַדֶּ֑יהָ כִּֽי־רָאֲתָ֤ה גוֹיִם֙ בָּ֣אוּ
מִקְדָּשָׁ֔הּ אֲשֶׁ֥ר צִוִּ֖יתָה לֹֽא־
יָבֹ֥אוּ בַקָּהָ֖ל לָֽךְ׃

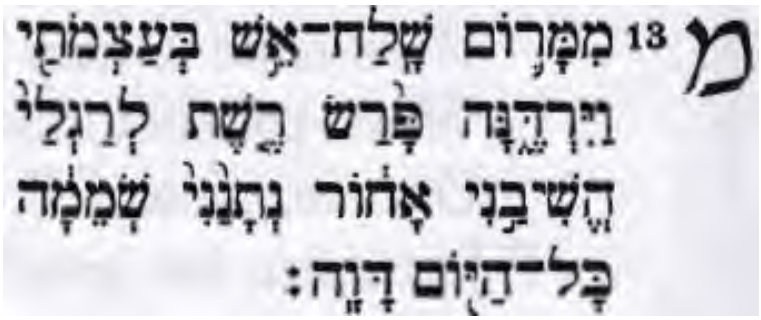
11 [All her people]are sighing,
searching for bread. [They gave up]
[their most precious things]
[in exchange for food],
to restore their life.
See, Adonai, and behold,
for I have become so despised.

כ 11 כָּל־עַמָּ֣הּ נֶאֱנָחִ֔ים מְבַקְּשִׁ֖ים
לֶ֑חֶם נָתְנ֤וּ מַחֲמַדֵּיהֶם֙ בְּאֹ֔כֶל
לְהָשִׁ֥יב נָ֖פֶשׁ רְאֵ֣ה יְהוָ֑ה
וְהַבִּ֣יטָ֔ה כִּֽי־הָיִ֖יתִי זוֹלֵלָֽה׃

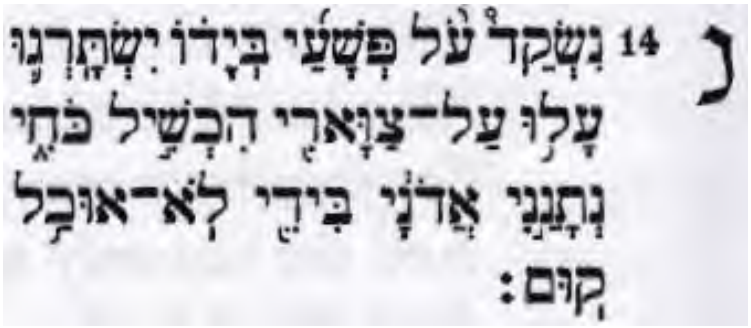
12 May[it not befall you],
all you[who pass by]!
Behold, and see
if there be pain[like my pain]
which was meted out to me.
[with which]Adonai[has afflicted me]
on the day [of His fierce anger].

ל 12 לֹ֣וא אֲלֵיכֶ֔ם כָּל־עֹבְרֵ֖י דָּ֑רֶךְ
הַבִּ֣יטוּ֔ וּרְא֕וּ אִם־יֵ֥שׁ מַכְאוֹב
כְּמַכְאֹבִ֖י אֲשֶׁר־עוֹלַ֣ל לִ֑י אֲשֶׁ֤ר
הוֹגָ֙ה יְהוָ֔ה בְּי֖וֹם חֲרוֹן־אַפּֽוֹ׃

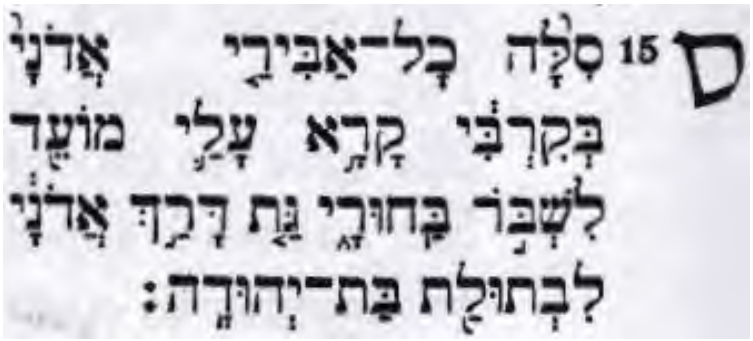
1:13 [From on high]
he sent a fire into my bones,
[which overpowered them].
He spread [a net for my] feet;
[he hurled me]backwards.
[He has left me]deserted.
[All day long] [I endure sickness].


מ 13 מִמָּרוֹם שָׁלַח־אֵשׁ בְּעַצְמֹתַי
וַיִּרְדֶּנָּה פָּרַשׂ רֶשֶׁת לְרַגְלָי
הֱשִׁיבַנִי אָחוֹר נְתָנַנִי שֹׁמֵמָה
כָּל־הַיּוֹם דָּוֶה׃

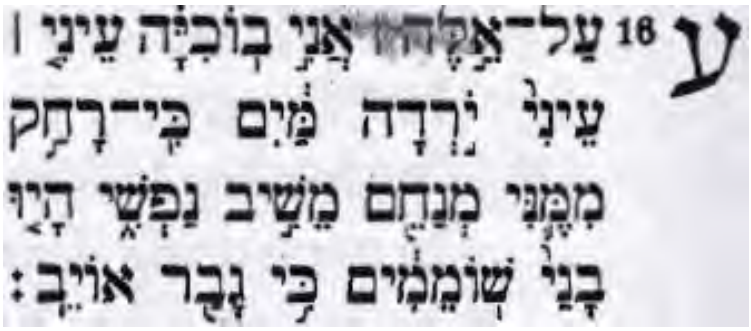
14 [Weighing me down]
is the yoke of my transgressions.
[By His hand] [they were lashed],
and thrust upon my neck;
It saps my strength.
The Lord[has given me over]
[into hands][that I can't withstand.


נ 14 נִשְׂקַד עֹל פְּשָׁעַי בְּיָדוֹ יִשְׂתָּרְגוּ
עָלוּ עַל־צַוָּארִי הִכְשִׁיל כֹּחִי
נְתָנַנִי אֲדֹנָי בִּידֵי לֹא־אוּכַל
קוּם׃

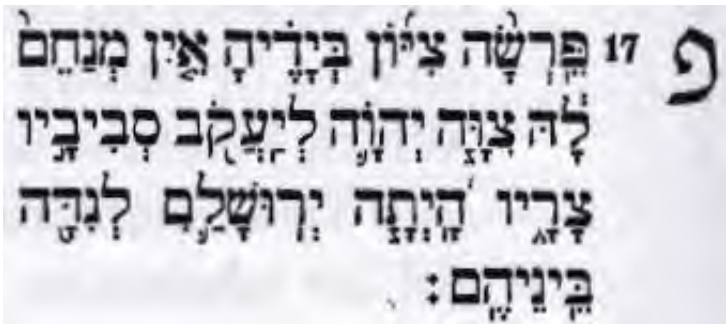
15 The Lord has trampled
all the warriors[that are in my midst].
[He has called] [against me]
an assembly to crush[my young men].
[As in a press], the Lord has trodden
fair maiden,[daughter of Judah].


ס 15 סָלָה כָל־אַבִּירַי אֲדֹנָי
בְּקִרְבִּי קָרָא עָלַי מוֹעֵד
לְשַׁבֵּר בַּחוּרָי גַּת דָּרַךְ אֲדֹנָי
לִבְתוּלַת בַּת־יְהוּדָה׃

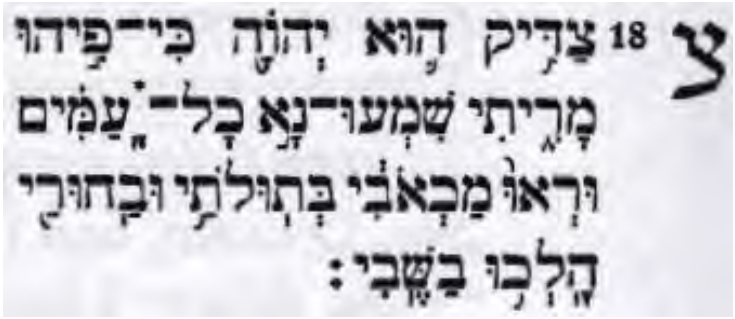
1:16 [For all of these things] |
I [am crying].
My eyes—my eyes are flowing in tears,
[because so far] [from me]
[is any comforter]
to restore my soul.
My children [are in despair]
because the enemy
has proved too strong.


ע 16 עַל־אֵ֠לֶּה אֲנִ֨י בוֹכִיָּ֜ה עֵינִ֣י | עֵינִ֗י יֹרְדָ֤ה מַּ֙יִם֙ כִּֽי־רָחַ֣ק מִמֶּ֔נִּי מְנַחֵ֖ם מֵשִׁ֣יב נַפְשִׁ֑י הָיוּ֙ בָנַ֣י שׁוֹמֵמִ֔ים כִּ֥י גָבַ֖ר אוֹיֵֽב׃

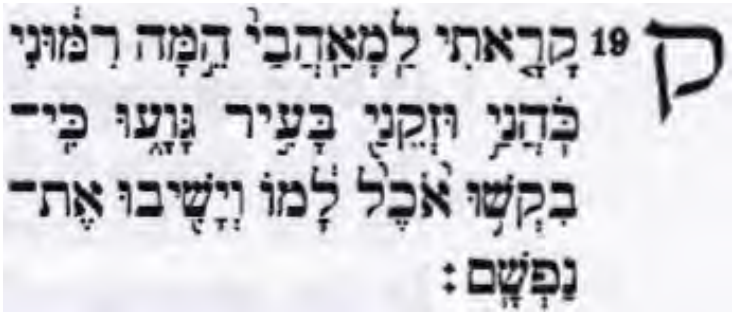
17 Zion stretches out [her hands].
[There is] [no one] [to comfort her].
God[has commanded]
[concerning Jacob]
[that his enemies] [should surround him].
Jerusalem[has become]
[a thing unclean]among them.


פ 17 פָּרְשָׂ֤ה צִיּוֹן֙ בְּיָדֶ֔יהָ אֵ֥ין מְנַחֵ֖ם לָ֑הּ צִוָּ֤ה יְהוָה֙ לְיַעֲקֹ֔ב סְבִיבָ֖יו צָרָ֑יו הָיְתָ֤ה יְרוּשָׁלַ֙͏ִם֙ לְנִדָּ֔ה בֵּינֵיהֶֽם׃

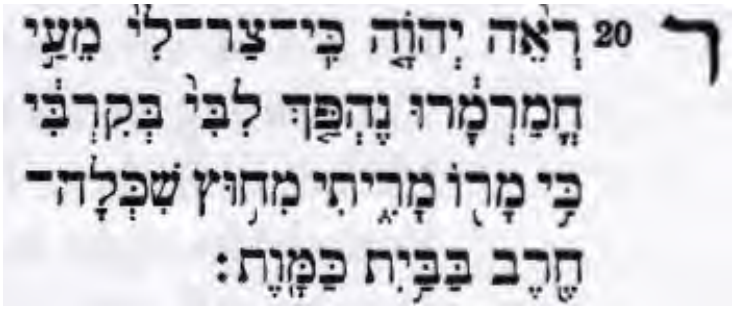
18 Righteous[is He], Adonai,
for I rebelled[against His word].
Listen now,[all you peoples],
and behold[my agony].
My maidens and young men
walked into captivity.


צ 18 צַדִּ֤יק הוּא֙ יְהוָ֔ה כִּֽי־פִ֥יהוּ מָרִ֖יתִי שִׁמְעוּ־נָ֣א כָל־עַמִּ֑ים וְרֹ֣אוּ מַכְאֹבִ֔י בְּתוּלֹתַ֖י וּבַחוּרָ֑י הָלְכ֖וּ בַּשֶּֽׁבִי׃

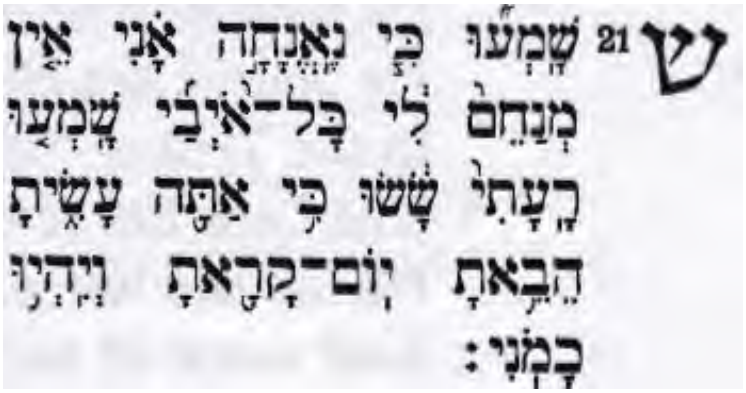
1:19 I called[to my lovers]:
they[deceived me].
My priests and my elders
[breathed their last] [inside the city],
[as they sought]food[for themselves]
[to restore]their souls.


19 קָרָאתִי לְמְאַהֲבַי הֵמָּה רִמּוּנִי
כֹּהֲנַי וּזְקֵנַי בָּעִיר גָּוָעוּ כִּי־
בִקְשׁוּ אֹכֶל לָמוֹ וְיָשִׁיבוּ אֶת־
נַפְשָׁם׃

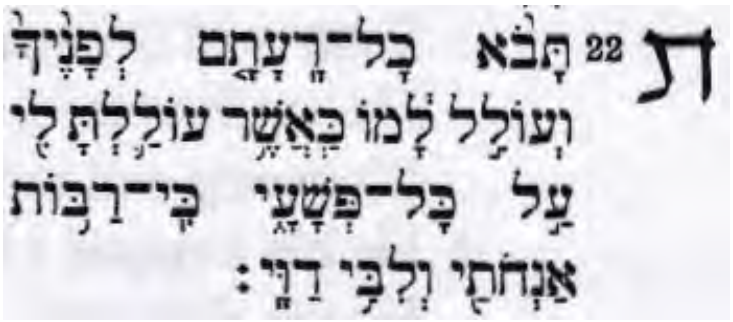
20 See, Adonai, my distress;
my innards[are churning].
My heart[has turned over]within me,
because I rebelled so grievously.
Outside, the sword strikes down,
At home, it's like death.


20 רְאֵה יְהוָה כִּי־צַר־לִי מֵעַי
חֳמַרְמָרוּ נֶהְפַּךְ לִבִּי בְּקִרְבִּי
כִּי מָרוֹ מָרִיתִי מִחוּץ שִׁכְּלָה־
חֶרֶב בַּבַּיִת כַּמָּוֶת׃

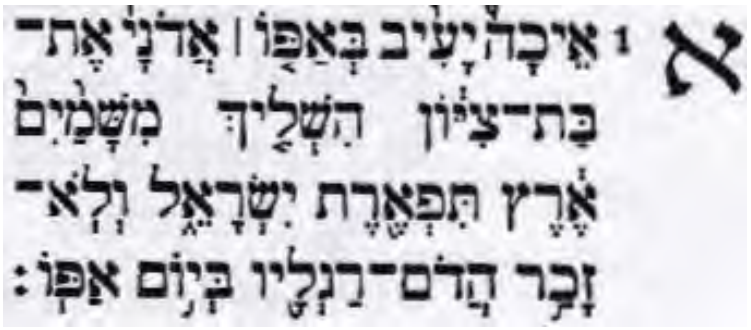
21 [They have heard]that I [am sighing].
[There is none]to give comfort to me.
All of my enemies
heard of my plight and rejoiced,
for it was You[who have done it].
Bring the day that you proclaimed—
let them become like me.


21 שָׁמְעוּ כִּי נֶאֱנָחָה אֲנִי אֵין
מְנַחֵם לִי כָּל־אֹיְבַי שָׁמְעוּ
רָעָתִי שָׂשׂוּ כִּי אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ
הֵבֵאתָ יוֹם־קָרָאתָ וְיִהְיוּ
כָמוֹנִי׃

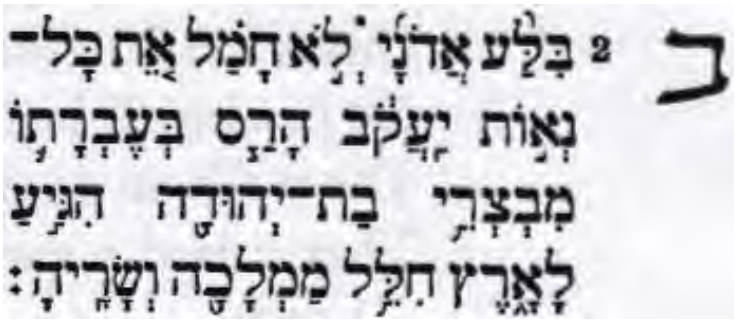
1:22 Let all their evil[come before You],
and You[will treat them]
[in the same way as]
[you have treated me]
for all my transgressions.
For great is my groaning, [final melody]
and my heart is sickened.



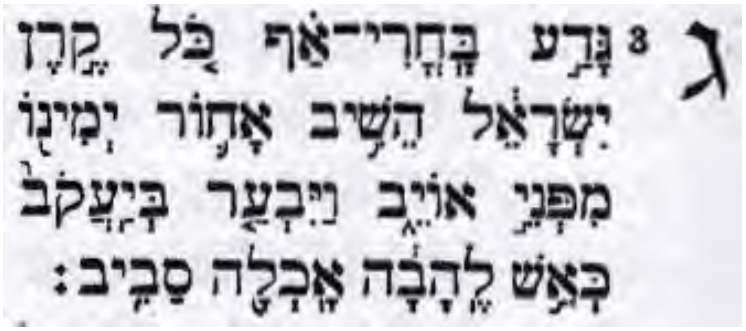
CHAPTER 2



2:1 Alas, Adonai has darkened
in his anger[the daughter of Zion].
[He has cast down]from heaven
to the earth
the glory of Israel,
and remembered not His footstool
on the day of his anger.



2 The Lord has laid waste,
showing[no pity].
All of the dwellings of Jacob
He shattered[in his displeasure] .
Fair Judah's stronghold
He has thrown to the ground.
He profaned the kingdom
and its leaders.



2:3 [He cut down],[in burning anger],
all the dignity of Israel.
[He turned] backward
[His right hand]before the enemy.
He burned through Jacob
like a flaming fire,
consuming on all sides.

2:4 He has bent his bow
[like an enemy];
poised [his right hand] like a foe.
[And he] [slew all]
[who delighted the eye].
In the tent[of the daughter of Zion]
He poured out, like fire,[His great fury].

ד 4 דָּרַךְ קַשְׁתּוֹ כְּאוֹיֵב נִצַּב יְמִינוֹ
כְּצָר וַיַּהַרֹג כֹּל מַחֲמַדֵּי־עָיִן
בְּאֹהֶל בַּת־צִיּוֹן שָׁפַךְ כָּאֵשׁ
חֲמָתוֹ׃

5 Adonái became[like an enemy];
He consumed Israel;
consumed[all her citadels];
destroyed her fortresses.
He increased[in the daughter of Judah]
mourning and lamentation.

ה 5 הָיָה אֲדֹנָי | כְּאוֹיֵב בִּלַּע
יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּלַּע כָּל־אַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ
שִׁחֵת מִבְצָרָיו וַיֶּרֶב בְּבַת־
יְהוּדָה תַּאֲנִיָּה וַאֲנִיָּה׃

6 He stripped His sukkah
[like it was a garden];
He shattered[His place of meeting].
He made[to be forgotten]in Zion
sabbath and festival.
He spurned, in the rage of His anger,
king and priest.

ו 6 וַיַּחְמֹס כַּגָּן שֻׂכּוֹ שִׁחֵת מֹעֲדוֹ
שָׁכַּח יְהוָה | בְּצִיּוֹן מוֹעֵד
וְשַׁבָּת וַיִּנְאַץ בְּזַעַם־אַפּוֹ מֶלֶךְ
וְכֹהֵן׃

2:7 Adonái abhorred His altar;
abandoned His sanctuary.
[He handed over] [to the enemy's hand]
the walls of its citadels.
[A great noise]
they made in the house of God
as on the day of a festival.

ז 7 זָנַח אֲדֹנָי | מִזְבְּחוֹ נִאֵר מִקְדָּשׁוֹ
הִסְגִּיר בְּיַד־אוֹיֵב חוֹמֹת
אַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ קוֹל נָתְנוּ בְּבֵית־
יְהוָה כְּיוֹם מוֹעֵד׃

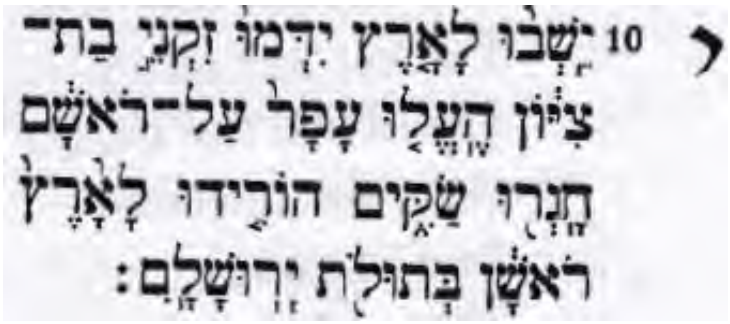
8 Adonái resolved to destroy
the wall[of Zion's daughter].
[He stretched out]a line.
He did not draw back His hand
from destroying—
bringing mourning to rampart and wall,
they crumble together.

ח 8 חָשַׁב יְהוָה | לְהַשְׁחִית חוֹמַת
בַּת־צִיּוֹן נָטָה קָו לֹא־הֵשִׁיב
יָדוֹ מִבַּלֵּעַ וַיַּאֲבֶל־חֵל וְחוֹמָה
יַחְדָּו אֻמְלָלוּ׃

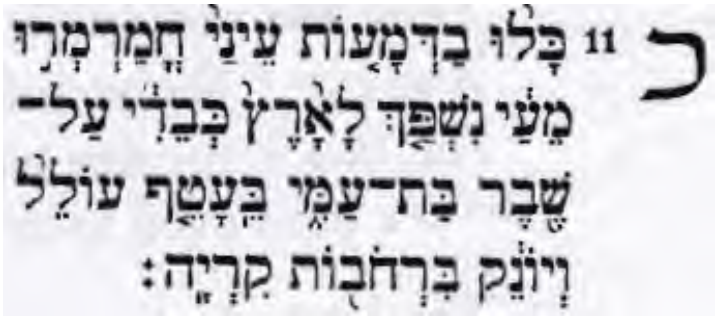
9 [Sunk into]the earth[are her gates].
He has smashed her bars into pieces.
Her king and leaders[are in exile];
there is no torah.
[And their prophets]:
they find no vision from Adonai.

ט 9 טָבְעוּ בָאָרֶץ שְׁעָרֶיהָ אִבַּד
וְשִׁבַּר בְּרִיחֶיהָ מַלְכָּהּ וְשָׂרֶיהָ
בַּגּוֹיִם אֵין תּוֹרָה גַּם־נְבִיאֶיהָ
לֹא־מָצְאוּ חָזוֹן מֵיְהוָה׃

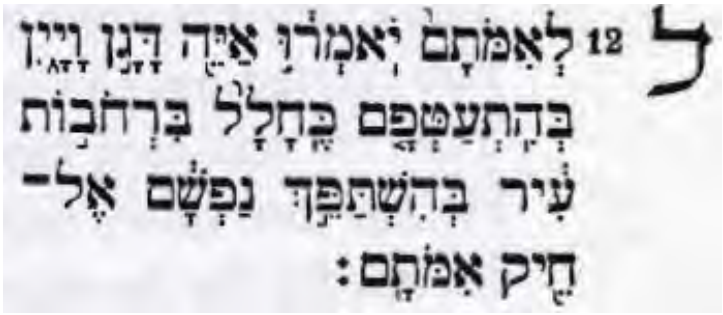
2:10 They sit on the ground, silent,
the elders of fair Zion.
[They have sprinkled]dust
on their heads,
[and wrapped themselves] in sackcloth.
[The girls bowed]their heads
to the ground—
the maidens of Jerusalem.


י יֵשְׁבוּ לָאָרֶץ יִדְּמוּ זִקְנֵי בַת־
צִיּוֹן הֶעֱלוּ עָפָר עַל־רֹאשָׁם
חָגְרוּ שַׂקִּים הוֹרִידוּ לָאָרֶץ
רֹאשָׁן בְּתוּלֹת יְרוּשָׁלִָם׃

11 My eyes[waste away]with weeping,
my innards are burning,
[poured out]on the ground
are my organs,
at the ruin[of my daughter people].
as children—mere infants—are fainting
in the squares of the city.


יא כָּלוּ בַדְּמָעוֹת עֵינַי חָמַרְמְרוּ
מֵעַי נִשְׁפַּךְ לָאָרֶץ כְּבֵדִי עַל־
שֶׁבֶר בַּת־עַמִּי בֶּעָטֵף עוֹלֵל
וְיוֹנֵק בִּרְחֹבוֹת קִרְיָה׃

12 [To their mothers] [they kept asking]:
“Where is the grain and wine?”
[As they languish]like the dying
in the squares of the city.
as their souls [ebb away]
in the bosoms of their mothers.


יב לְאִמֹּתָם יֹאמְרוּ אַיֵּה דָגָן וְיָיִן
בְּהִתְעַטְּפָם כֶּחָלָל בִּרְחֹבוֹת
עִיר בְּהִשְׁתַּפֵּךְ נַפְשָׁם אֶל־
חֵיק אִמֹּתָם׃

2:13 [How to bear witness for you]?
To what[can I compare you],
O daughter of Jerusalem?
[To what can I] [liken you],
[that I may console you]?
O maiden,[daughter of Zion].
For great,[like the sea],[is your ruin].
Who can heal you?

מ 13 מָה־אָעִידֵךְ מָה אֲדַמֶּה־לָּךְ
הַבַּת יְרוּשָׁלִַם מָה אַשְׁוֶה־לָּךְ
וַאֲנַחֲמֵךְ בְּתוּלַת בַּת־צִיּוֹן
כִּי־גָדוֹל כַּיָּם שִׁבְרֵךְ מִי
יִרְפָּא־לָךְ׃

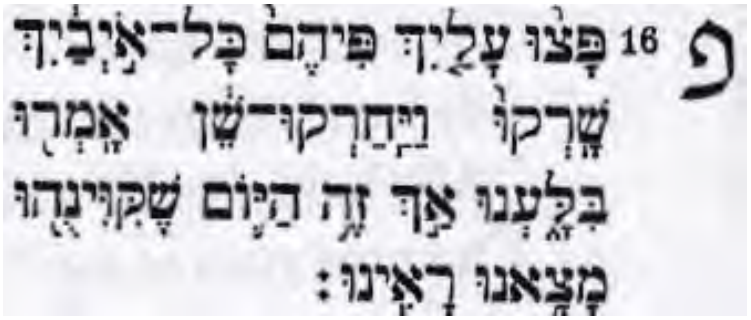
14 [Your prophets]envisioned[for you]
delusion and folly.
They did not reveal your iniquities;
[this might have restored]your fortunes.
[And what they offered]to you
was visions of vanity and deception.

נ 14 נְבִיאַיִךְ חָזוּ לָךְ שָׁוְא וְתָפֶל
וְלֹא־גָלוּ עַל־עֲוֹנֵךְ לְהָשִׁיב
שְׁבוּתֵךְ וַיֶּחֱזוּ לָךְ מַשְׂאוֹת שָׁוְא
וּמַדּוּחִים׃

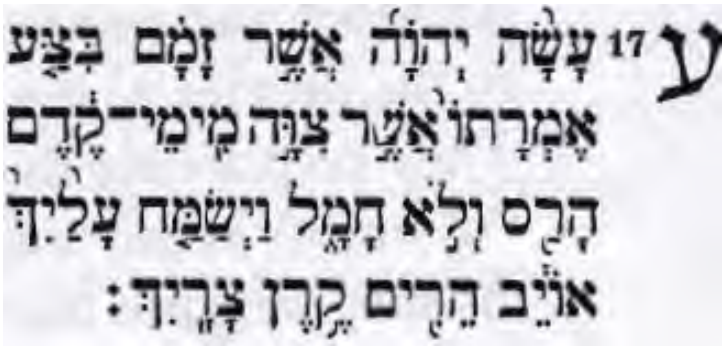
15 They clap their hands at you,
[all who pass]your way.
They hiss, and shake their heads
at the daughter of Jerusalem:
"[Is this it]? the city
that was called 'perfect in beauty',
'the joy of the whole earth?' "

ס 15 סָפְקוּ עָלַיִךְ כַּפַּיִם כָּל־עֹבְרֵי
דָּרֶךְ שָׁרְקוּ וַיָּנִעוּ רֹאשָׁם עַל־
בַּת יְרוּשָׁלִַם הֲזֹאת הָעִיר
שֶׁיֹּאמְרוּ כְּלִילַת יֹפִי מָשׂוֹשׂ
לְכָל־הָאָרֶץ׃

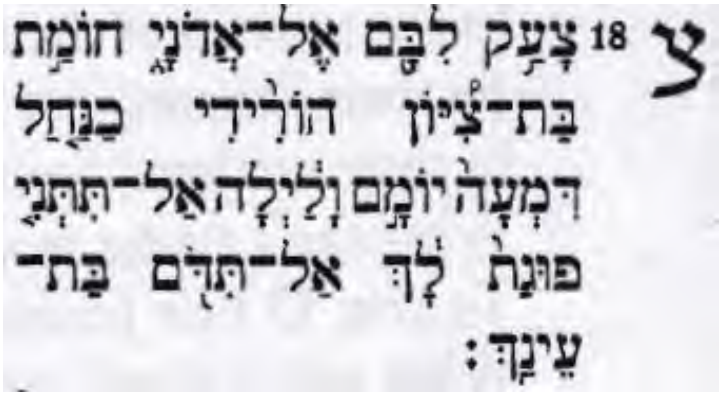
2:16 They open their mouths
against you, all your enemies.
They whistle[and grind their teeth].
[They say], "[We devoured her]."
Indeed this[is the day]
[that we have been waiting for].
We have arrived ; we have seen it.


פ 16 פָּצוּ עָלַיִךְ פִּיהֶם כָּל־אֹיְבַיִךְ
שָׁרְקוּ וַיַּחַרְקוּ־שֵׁן אָמְרוּ
בָּלַעְנוּ אַךְ זֶה הַיּוֹם שֶׁקִּוִּינָהוּ
מָצָאנוּ רָאִינוּ׃

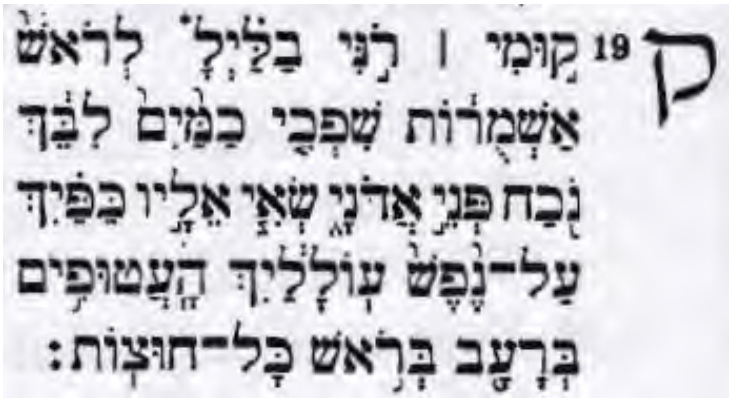
17 God has accomplished
[what He Has purposed].
He fulfilled His decree,
that he commanded[from days of old].
[He tore down], [and did not pity].
He let an enemy [rejoice over you].
He raised the pride of your foes.


ע 17 עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר זָמַם בִּצַּע
אִמְרָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה מִימֵי־קֶדֶם
הָרַס וְלֹא חָמָל וַיְשַׂמֵּח עָלַיִךְ
אוֹיֵב הֵרִים קֶרֶן צָרָיִךְ׃

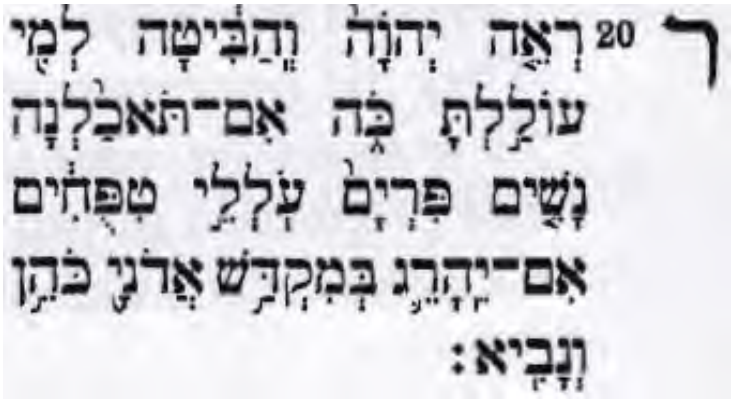
18 Their heart cried out to the Lord.
Walls [of the daughter of Zion]
Let tears[run down]like a river.
Day and night, give yourself no respite.
[Don't let even your eyes]find rest.


צ 18 צָעַק לִבָּם אֶל־אֲדֹנָי חוֹמַת
בַּת־צִיּוֹן הוֹרִידִי כַנַּחַל
דִּמְעָה יוֹמָם וָלָיְלָה אַל־תִּתְּנִי
פּוּגַת לָךְ אַל־תִּדֹּם בַּת־
עֵינֵךְ׃

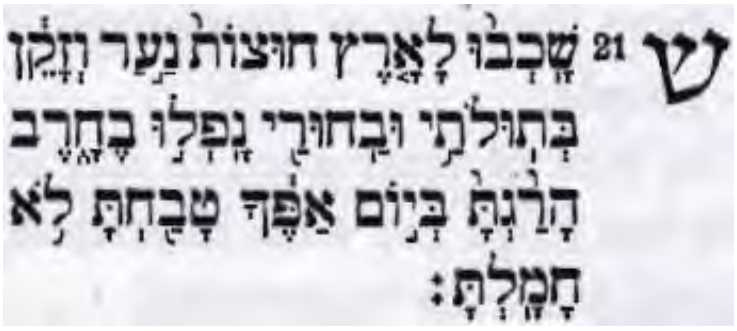
2:19 Arise! | Cry out [in the night]
[at the beginning] of the watches.
[Pour out] your heart like water.
before the face of Adonai.
[Lift up] to Him [your hands],
[for the life] [of your young children]
who swoon from hunger
at every street corner.


ק 19 קוּמִי | רֹנִּי בַלַּיְלָה לְרֹאשׁ
אַשְׁמֻרוֹת שִׁפְכִי כַמַּיִם לִבֵּךְ
נֹכַח פְּנֵי אֲדֹנָי שְׂאִי אֵלָיו כַּפַּיִךְ
עַל־נֶפֶשׁ עֹוְלָלַיִךְ הָעֲטוּפִים
בְּרָעָב בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל־חוּצוֹת׃

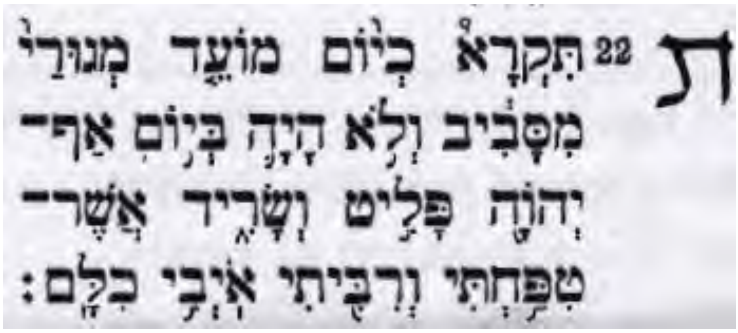
20 See, Adonai, and behold:
whom [have you ever] treated so?
[Should the women] eat [their little ones],
the children they have nursed?
[Should there be slain],
in God's holy place, priest and prophet?


ר 20 רְאֵה יְהוָה וְהַבִּיטָה לְמִי
עוֹלַלְתָּ כֹּה אִם־תֹּאכַלְנָה
נָשִׁים פִּרְיָם עֹלְלֵי טִפֻּחִים
אִם־יֵהָרֵג בְּמִקְדַּשׁ אֲדֹנָי כֹּהֵן
וְנָבִיא׃

21 On the ground, [in the streets]
they lie, young and old.
My maidens and young men
fell [by the sword].
[You slew them]
on the day of your anger.
[You slaughtered them];
you showed no mercy.

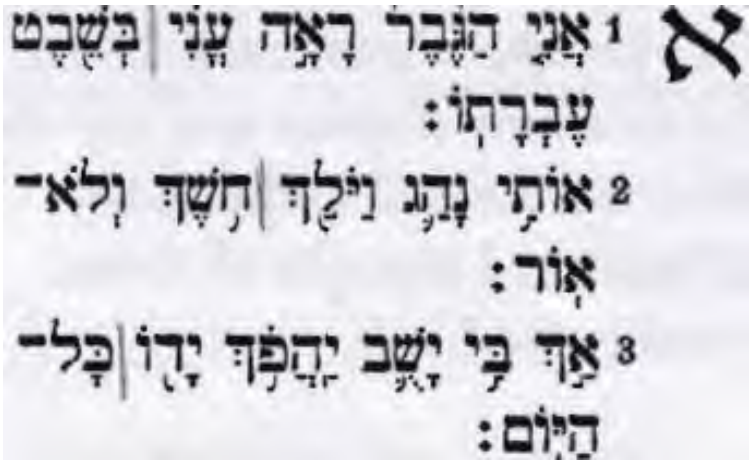

ש 21 שָׁכְבוּ לָאָרֶץ חוּצוֹת נַעַר וְזָקֵן
בְּתוּלֹתַי וּבַחוּרַי נָפְלוּ בֶחָרֶב
הָרַגְתָּ בְּיוֹם אַפֶּךָ טָבַחְתָּ לֹא
חָמָלְתָּ׃

2:22 [You invited]—as[on a feast day]—
my neighbors[from all around].
[There were none],
on the day of God's wrath:
refugees or survivors.
Those that I nursed and brought up,
[final melody]
my enemy has wiped out.


ת 22 תִּקְרָא כְיוֹם מוֹעֵד מְגוּרַי
מִסָּבִיב וְלֹא הָיָה בְּיוֹם אַף־
יְהוָה פָּלִיט וְשָׂרִיד אֲשֶׁר־
טִפַּחְתִּי וְרִבִּיתִי אֹיְבִי כִלָּם׃

CHAPTER 3 [special melody—see note below]

א ani *Who is it who speaks here?*


א
1 אֲנִי הַגֶּבֶר רָאָה עֳנִי בְּשֵׁבֶט
עֶבְרָתוֹ׃
2 אוֹתִי נָהַג וַיֹּלַךְ חֹשֶׁךְ וְלֹא־
אוֹר׃
3 אַךְ בִּי יָשֻׁב יַהֲפֹךְ יָדוֹ כָּל־
הַיּוֹם׃

3:1-3 I am the man

who has seen affliction↗

by the rod of his anger.

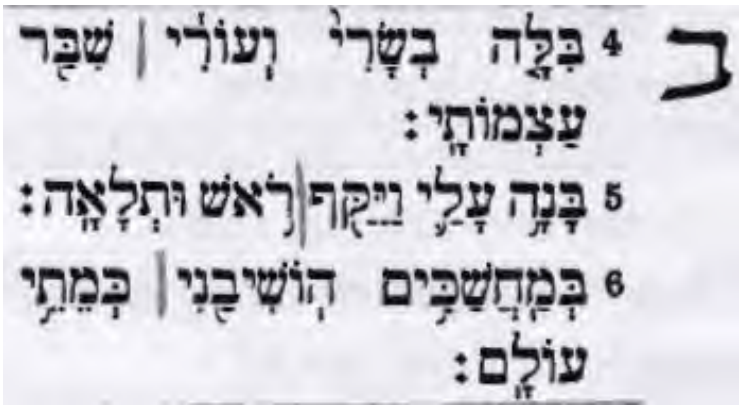
Me—he has lead and driven↑

in darkness, not in light.

Surely on me He brings down His hand↘

the whole day long.

ב bila *God wore me down*
(or: life wore me down)


ב
4 בִּלָּה בְשָׂרִי וְעוֹרִי שִׁבַּר
עַצְמוֹתָי׃
5 בָּנָה עָלַי וַיַּקַּף רֹאשׁ וּתְלָאָה׃
6 בְּמַחֲשַׁכִּים הוֹשִׁיבַנִי כְּמֵתֵי
עוֹלָם׃

4-6 He wore away my flesh and skin↗,

and shattered all my bones.

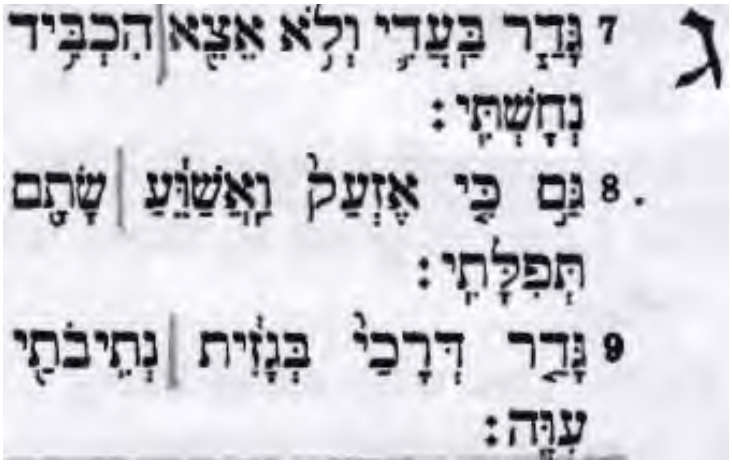
He has besieged me and surrounded me↑

with bitterness and woe.

He has made me dwell in darkness↘

like men long dead.

ג gadar *God walled me in*


ג
7 גָּדַר בַּעֲדִי וְלֹא אֵצֵא הִכְבִּיד
נְחָשְׁתִּי׃
8 גַּם כִּי אֶזְעַק וַאֲשַׁוֵּעַ שָׁתַם
תְּפִלָּתִי׃
9 גָּדַר דְּרָכַי בְּגָזִית נְתִיבֹתַי
עִוָּה׃

7-9 He has walled me in

till I can't escape↗.

He has weighed me down with chains.

And when I cry and plead↑

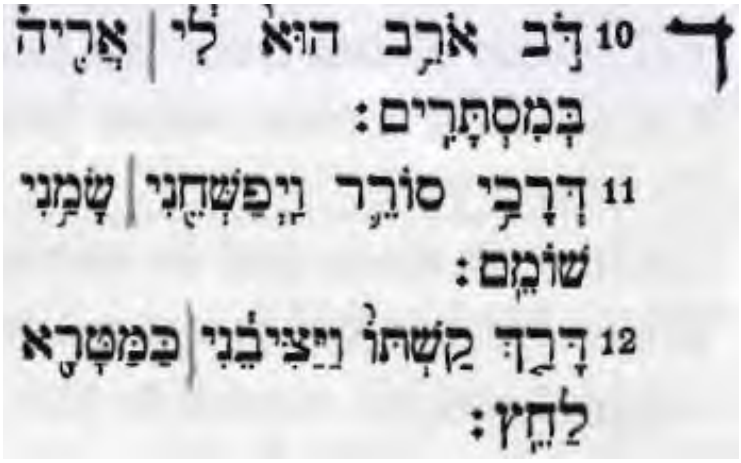
He shuts out my prayer.

He has blocked my way with boulders↘.

He has twisted my path.

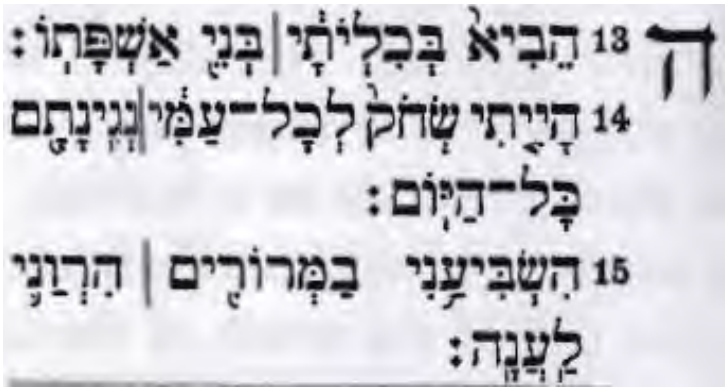
ד **dov** (bear)

He is a lurking bear



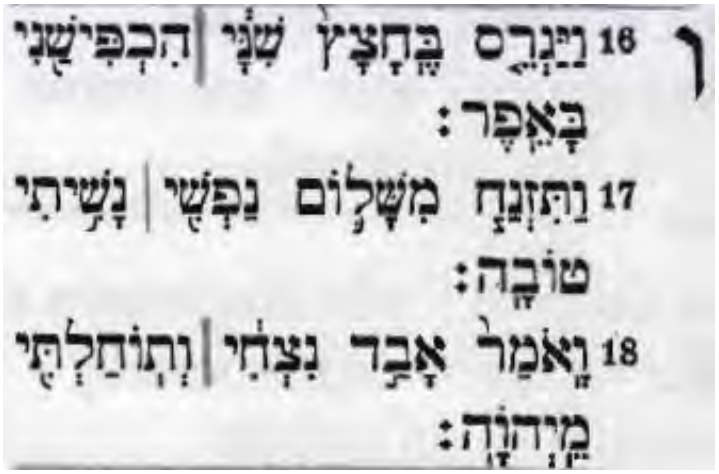
ה **hevi** (brought)

What hath God wrought?



ו (zot **ve** zot **ve** zot ...)

One damn thing after another!



3:10-12 He is a lurking bear to me↗,
a lion in hiding.
He has filled my path with thorns↑,
torn me in pieces, left me forlorn.
He has directed His bow↘
and made me the arrow's mark.

13-15 He shot into my vitals↗
the arrows of His quiver.
I am a derision to my people↑,
they taunt me all day long.
He has filled me up with bitterness↘,
and made me drink wormwood.

16-18 He has broken my teeth with
gravel↗, and covered me with ashes.
He has bereft me of all peace↑;
I forgot what it is to prosper.
I said, "my strength has perished↘,
even my hope in God."

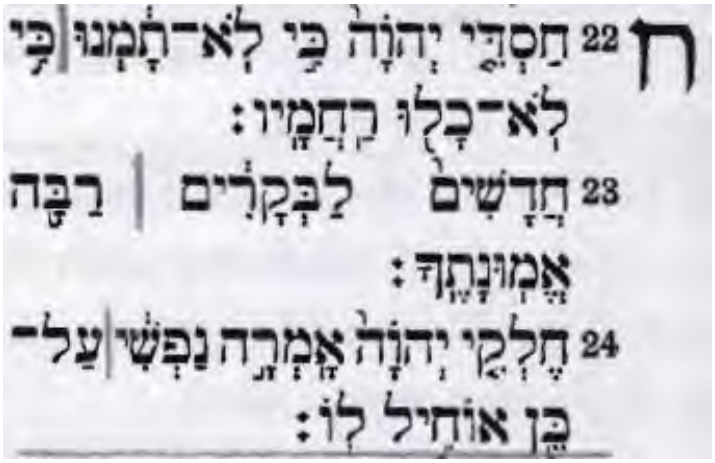
ז **zachor** *Remember!*
zot *This* is what I will do

זָכֹר־עָנְיִי וּמְרוּדַי לַעֲנָה וְרֹאשׁ׃ 19
זָכוֹר תִּזְכּוֹר וְתָשֹׁחַ עָלַי נַפְשִׁי׃ 20
זֹאת אָשִׁיב אֶל־לִבִּי עַל־כֵּן אוֹחִיל׃ 21

3:19-21 Remember my afflictions and sorrow↗, the wormwood and the gall.
My soul remembers clearly↑,
and is now bowed down within me.
Here's what I'll tell my heart↘,
and so recover hope:

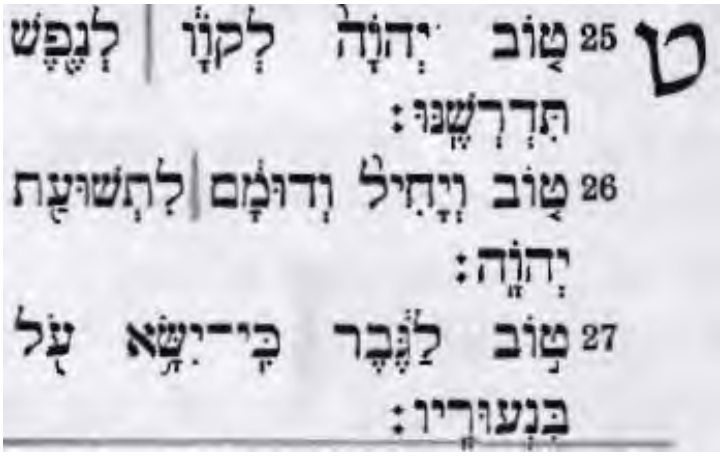
We come to the center of the megilla,
and a ray of hope comes down

ח **chesed** Kindness, mercy


חַסְדֵי יְהוָה כִּי לֹא־תָמְנוּ כִּי לֹא־כָלוּ רַחֲמָיו׃ 22
חֲדָשִׁים לַבְּקָרִים רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתֶךָ׃ 23
חֶלְקִי יְהוָה אָמְרָה נַפְשִׁי עַל־כֵּן אוֹחִיל לוֹ׃ 24

22-24 The kindness of the Lord has not ended↗, His mercies not exhausted.
They are new every morning↑.
Raba emunatecha.
"My portion is God", says my soul↘,
thus do I hope in Him.

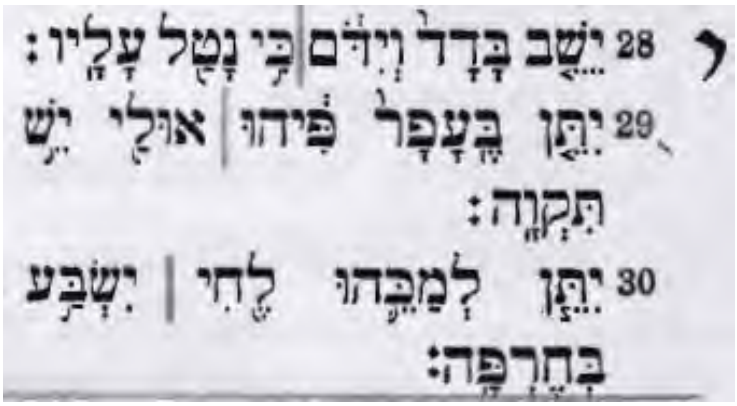
ט **tov** Good
Whom is God good to?


טוֹב יְהוָה לְקוָּו לְנֶפֶשׁ תִּדְרְשֶׁנּוּ׃ 25
טוֹב וְיָחִיל וְדוּמָם לִתְשׁוּעַת יְהוָה׃ 26
טוֹב לַגֶּבֶר כִּי־יִשָּׂא עֹל בְּנְעוּרָיו׃ 27

25-27 God is good to the one who trusts↗, to every soul that seeks Him.
It is good to wait in silence↑
for salvation from Adonai.
It is good that one bears the yoke↘
from one's youth and on.

י yeshev Sit

Let us sit alone in silence



3:28-30 Let us sit alone in silence↗,

because God lays it upon us,

to put our lips to the dust↑:

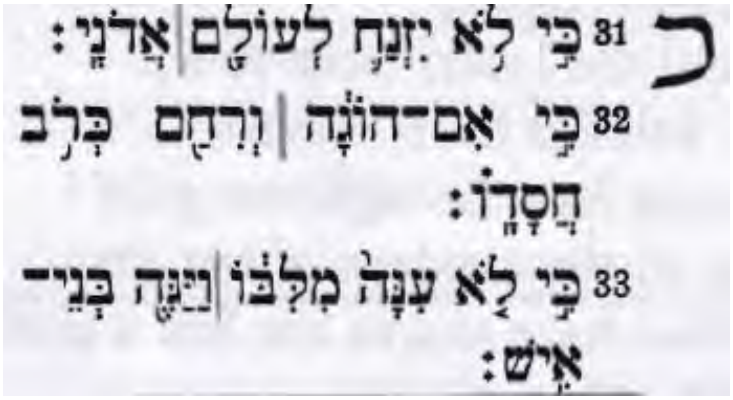
perhaps there still is hope.

Let him offer our cheek to the smiter↘.

and suffer all men's taunts.

כ ki Because …

God will not cast us off forever



31-33 For the Lord will not cast us off↗

forever and ever.

He wounds, but He shows compassion↑,

abundant is His kindness.

For He is loathe to cause pain or grief↘

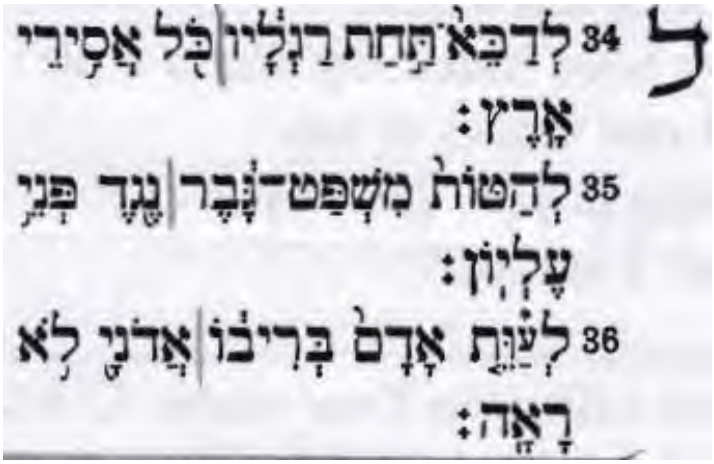
to the children of men.

Our window of hope is now closing.
The oppressor's boot is felt once more

ל le dakei tachat raglav

To crush us under us His feet;

to deny us rights and justice



34-36 To crush under His feet↗

all the prisoners of the earth,

To deny a man his rights↑

before the face of the Most High,

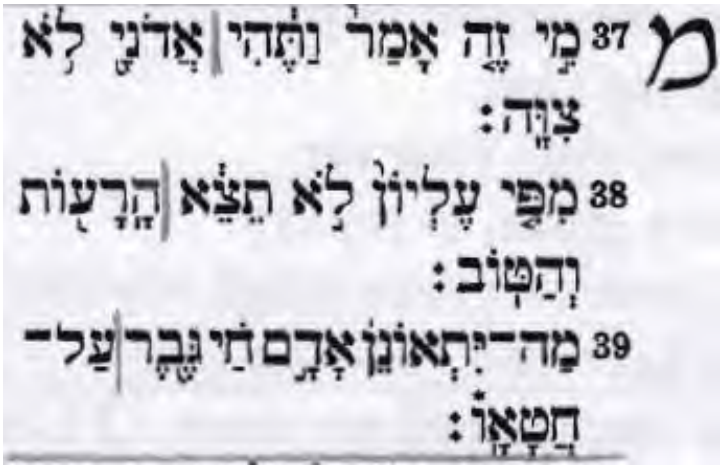
to deprive a person of justice↘,

does not the Lord see it?

מ **mi** Who?

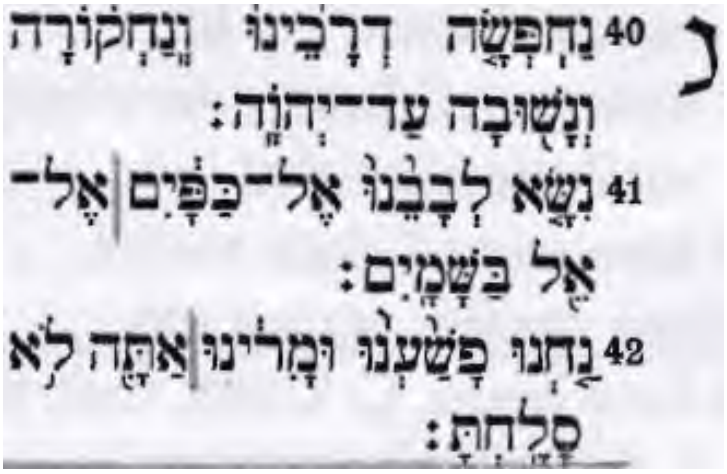
Who will live and who will die?

"Mi yichyeh u mi yamut?"



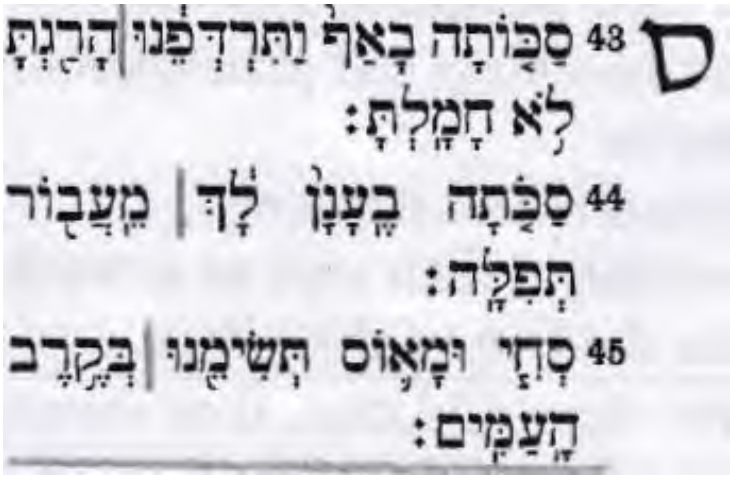
נ **nachp'sa v'nachkora**

Let us search and examine our ways



ס **sacotah**

God covered Himself



3:37-39 Who's will can be fulfilled↗,

if God did not ordain it?

From the mouth of the Most High↑

do not good and evil come?

Of what should a person complain↘?

Only for one's own sins!

40-42 Let us search and examine

our ways↗, and return to Adonai.

Let us lift up our hearts and our hands↑

to God who is in the heavens.

We transgressed and we rebelled↘,

and You have not forgiven.

43-45 You wrapped Yourself in wrath

and pursued↗ us,

and slain us without pity.

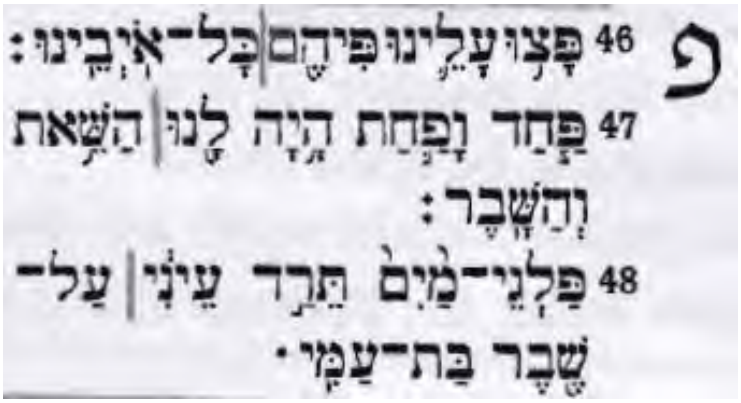
You covered Yourself with a cloud↑

so prayer cannot pass through it.

You have made us filth and refuse↘

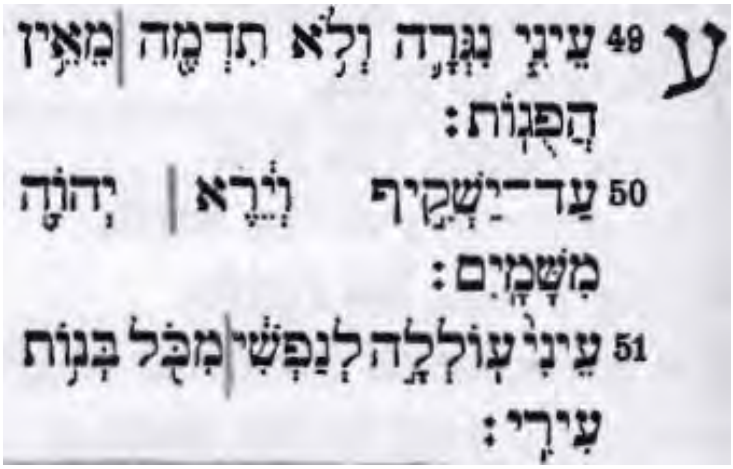
among the nations.

פ patsu pihem
They opened their mouths
Pachad va fachat hayah lanu
Panic and pitfall befell us


46 פָּצוּ עָלֵינוּ פִּיהֶם כָּל־אוֹיְבֵינוּ׃
47 פַּחַד וָפַחַת הָיָה לָנוּ הַשֹּׁאָה
וְהַשָּׁבֶר׃
48 פַּלְגֵי־מַיִם תֵּרַד עֵינִי עַל־
שֶׁבֶר בַּת־עַמִּי׃

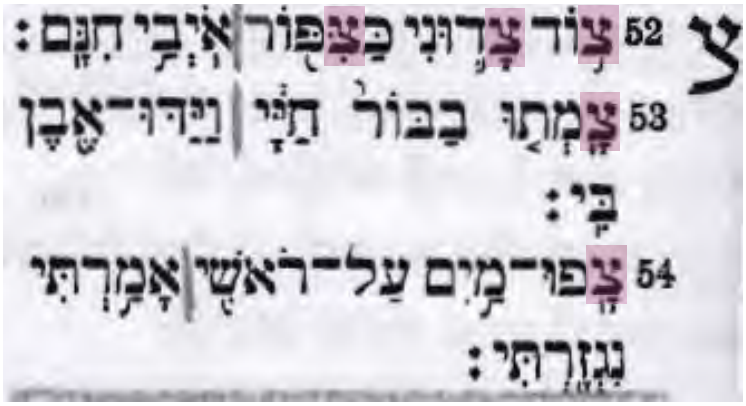
3:46-48 Our enemies have opened
their mouths↗ in chorus against us.
Panic and pitfall befell us↑,
ravages and ruin.
My eyes run with streams of water↘
at my poor people's ruin.

ע einei
My eyes flow without ceasing


49 עֵינִי נִגְּרָה וְלֹא תִדְמֶה מֵאֵין
הֲפֻגוֹת׃
50 עַד־יַשְׁקִיף וְיֵרֶא יְהוָה
מִשָּׁמָיִם׃
51 עֵינִי עוֹלְלָה לְנַפְשִׁי מִכֹּל בְּנוֹת
עִירִי׃

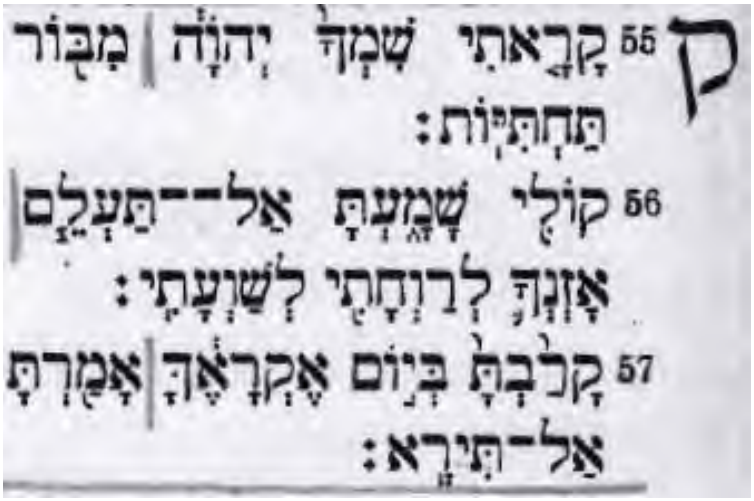
49-51 My eyes flow without ceasing↗,
and find no relief.
Until the Lord looks down↑
and sees us from the heavens.
My eyes are sore with sorrow↘
for the daughters of my city.

צ [Five *tsaddi*'s in this verse come like blows of a hammer]


52 צוֹד צָדוּנִי כַּצִּפּוֹר אֹיְבַי חִנָּם׃
53 צָמְתוּ בַבּוֹר חַיָּי וַיַּדּוּ־אֶבֶן
בִּי׃
54 צָפוּ־מַיִם עַל־רֹאשִׁי אָמַרְתִּי
נִגְזָרְתִּי׃

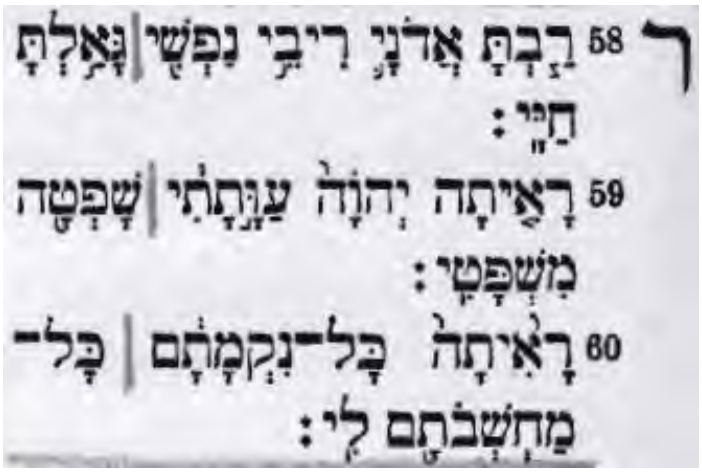
52-54 They hunted me down
like a bird↗,
those who hate me for no reason.
They dropped me to die in a dungeon↑,
and threw stones down upon me.
The waters flowed over my head↘.
and I said "I am cut off."

ק **karati** *I called on your name…*
karavta *… and You drew near*


ק
55 קָרָאתִי שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה | מִבּוֹר
תַּחְתִּיּוֹת׃
56 קוֹלִי שָׁמַעְתָּ אַל־תַּעְלֵם |
אָזְנְךָ לְרִוָחָתִי לְשַׁוְעָתִי׃
57 קָרַבְתָּ בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָאֶךָ | אָמַרְתָּ
אַל־תִּירָא׃

3:55-57 I called on your name, Adonai↗,
from the depths of the dungeon.
You then heard me crying↑:
“Don’t close your ears to my pleading.”
You drew near on the day
that I called↘You,
and said to me, “Do not fear!”

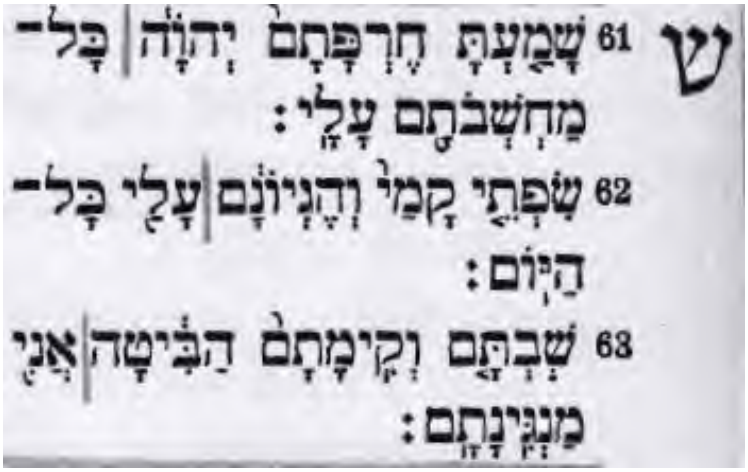
ר **riva riveinu** *Plead our cause…*
r’eh *… and see*


ר
58 רַבְתָּ אֲדֹנָי רִיבֵי נַפְשִׁי | גָּאַלְתָּ
חַיָּי׃
59 רָאִיתָה יְהוָה עַוָּתָתִי | שָׁפְטָה
מִשְׁפָּטִי׃
60 רָאִיתָה כָּל־נִקְמָתָם | כָּל־
מַחְשְׁבֹתָם לִי׃

58-60 You have defended the cause
of my soul↗;
you have redeemed my life.
Adonai, you see how I am wronged↑,
O vindicate my right!
You have seen all of their vengeance↘,
all their designs toward me.

ש shamata

Surely God heard


ש
61 שָׁמַעְתָּ חֶרְפָּתָם יְהוָה כָּל־
מַחְשְׁבֹתָם עָלָי׃
62 שִׂפְתֵי קָמַי וְהֶגְיוֹנָם עָלַי כָּל־
הַיּוֹם׃
63 שִׁבְתָּם וְקִימָתָם הַבִּיטָה אֲנִי
מַנְגִּינָתָם׃

3:61-63 You have heard their reproach

Adonai↗,

the schemes they plot against me.

The talk of the men who attack me↑;

their muttering all day long.

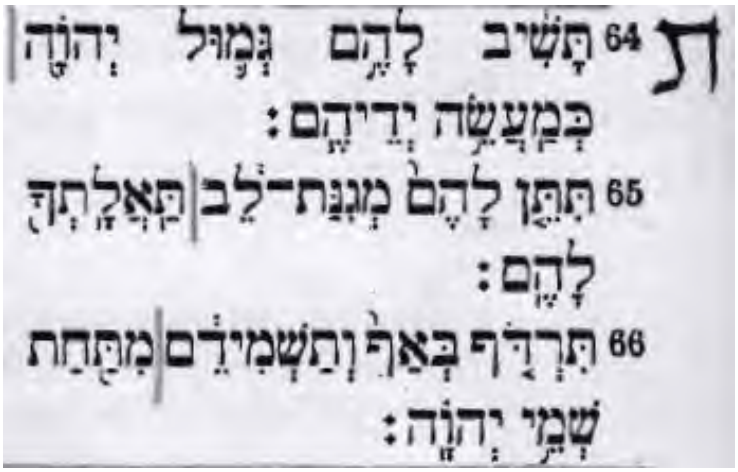
Observe their sitting and rising↘;

I am their taunting song.

ת tashiv *(Pay them back!)*

But let's ask without the vengeance:

God, remove this evil from our world!


ת
64 תָּשִׁיב לָהֶם גְּמוּל יְהוָה
כְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם׃
65 תִּתֵּן לָהֶם מְגִנַּת־לֵב תַּאֲלָתְךָ
לָהֶם׃
66 תִּרְדֹּף בְּאַף וְתַשְׁמִידֵם מִתַּחַת
שְׁמֵי יְהוָה׃

64-66 Pay them back, Adonai↗

according to their deeds.

Give them anguish of heart↑,

Your curse should be upon them!

Pursue them in wrath

and destroy them↘,

from under the heaven of God.

CHAPTER 4

א 1 אֵיכָה יוּעַם זָהָב יִשְׁנֶא הַכֶּתֶם
הַטָּוב תְּשֻׁתַּפֵּכְנָה אַבְנֵי־קֹדֶשׁ
בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל־חוּצוֹת׃

4:1 Alas, the gold is dulled,
debased, the finest gold.
[Sacred gems]are scattered
upon[every street corner].

ב 2 בְּנֵי צִיּוֹן הַיְקָרִים הַמְסֻלָאִים
בַּפָּז אֵיכָה נֶחְשְׁבוּ לְנִבְלֵי־
חֶרֶשׂ מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי יוֹצֵר׃

2 [The sons of Zion] are precious,
[worth their weight] in fine gold.
How[they are treated] [as earthen jugs],
The work of the potter's hand.

ג 3 גַּם־תַּנִּין חָלְצוּ שַׁד הֵינִיקוּ
גּוּרֵיהֶן בַּת־עַמִּי לְאַכְזָר
כְּיָעֵנִים בַּמִּדְבָּר׃

3 [Even the jackels]present the breast
[and give suck] [to their young ones].
[But my poor people] [has become cruel]
[like the ostriches]in the wilderness.

ד 4 דָּבַק לְשׁוֹן יוֹנֵק אֶל־חִכּוֹ
בַּצָּמָא עוֹלָלִים שָׁאֲלוּ לֶחֶם
פֹּרֵשׂ אֵין לָהֶם׃

4 The tongue of the baby[at the breast]
[cleaves to his palate], for thirst.
[The young children]ask for bread.
[Not one person] spares a scrap for them.

ה 5 הָאֹכְלִים לְמַעֲדַנִּים נָשַׁמּוּ
בַּחוּצוֹת הָאֲמֻנִים עַל תּוֹלָע
חִבְּקוּ אַשְׁפָּתוֹת׃

5[Those who once ate] [all the best food]
[now lie rotting]on the street.
[Those brought up] in scarlet clothing
[huddle now] [on heaps of garbage].

4:6 All the crimes[of my poor people]
[have outdone] [the sins of Sodom].
[which was overturned]in a moment,
[no time for a man] [to wring his hands].

ן 6 וַיִּגְדַּל עֲוֹן בַּת־עַמִּי מֵחַטַּאת
סְדֹם הַהֲפוּכָה כְּמוֹ־רָגַע
וְלֹא־חָלוּ בָהּ יָדָיִם׃

7 [Her elect ones]were purer
even than snow,
[and they were whiter]still than milk.
Ruddy like rubies
[was their complexion],
[Like the sapphire]in their features.

ז 7 זַכּוּ נְזִירֶיהָ מִשֶּׁלֶג צָחוּ מֵחָלָב
אָדְמוּ עֶצֶם מִפְנִינִים סַפִּיר
גִּזְרָתָם׃

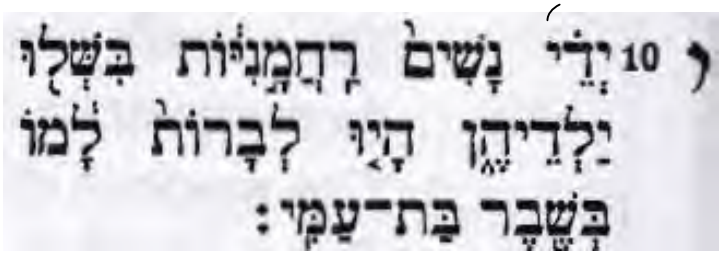
8 Now their appearance
[is blacker than soot],
They go unrecognized in the streets.
[Their skin has]shriveled[on their bones],
it has become as dry as wood.

ח 8 חָשַׁךְ מִשְּׁחוֹר תָּאֳרָם לֹא נִכָּרוּ
בַּחוּצוֹת צָפַד עוֹרָם עַל־
עַצְמָם יָבֵשׁ הָיָה כָּעֵץ׃

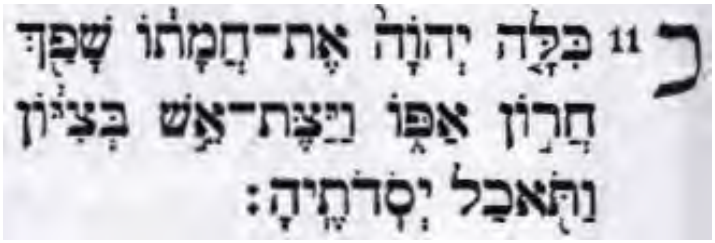
9 We'd rather be slain by the sword
[than to find death[by starvation,
[For these] [pine away].
[They are striken]
[for lack of the fruits]of the field.

ט 9 טוֹבִים הָיוּ חַלְלֵי־חֶרֶב
מֵחַלְלֵי רָעָב שֶׁהֵם יָזְבוּ
מְדֻקָּרִים מִתְּנוּבוֹת שָׂדָי׃

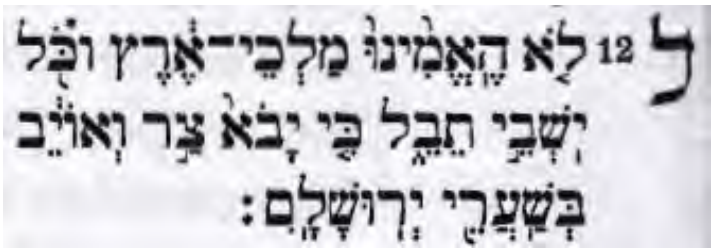
4:10 [With their own hands],
the women[of tender hearts]
have boiled[their own children].
This became[their food] in the wreckage
of the daughter of my people.


י 10 יְדֵי נָשִׁים רַחֲמָנִיּוֹת בִּשְּׁלוּ
יַלְדֵיהֶן הָיוּ לְבָרוֹת לָמוֹ
בְּשֶׁבֶר בַּת־עַמִּי׃

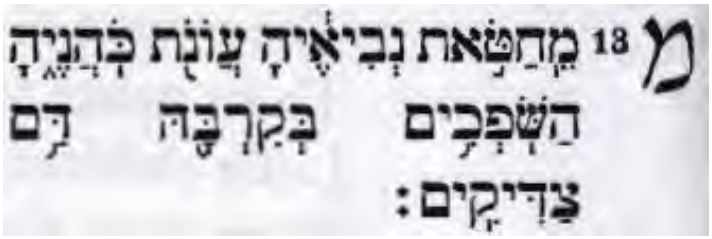
11 The Lord has vented [all His fury].
[He poured out] His burning anger.
[He has kindled] [a fire in Zion]
[that has devoured]its foundations.


כ 11 כִּלָּה יְהוָה אֶת־חֲמָתוֹ שָׁפַךְ
חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ וַיַּצֶּת־אֵשׁ בְּצִיּוֹן
וַתֹּאכַל יְסֹדֹתֶיהָ׃

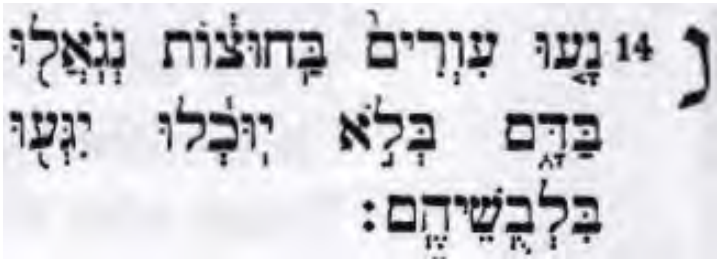
12 The kings[of the earth]
[did not believe],
[nor did anyone]in all the world,
that a foe or an enemy[could ever enter]
[into the gates]of Jerusalem.


ל 12 לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ מַלְכֵי־אֶרֶץ וְכֹל
יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל כִּי יָבֹא צַר וְאוֹיֵב
בְּשַׁעֲרֵי יְרוּשָׁלִָם׃

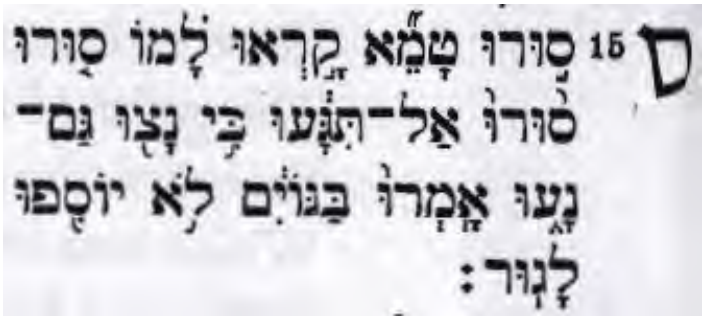
13 [From the sins] [of her prophets]
[and the crimes]of her priests,
who had shed in her midst,
the blood of the righteous ones.


מ 13 מֵחַטֹּאת נְבִיאֶיהָ עֲוֹנֹת כְּהֲנֶיהָ
הַשֹּׁפְכִים בְּקִרְבָּהּ דַּם
צַדִּיקִים׃

4:14 [They roamed]
[like blind men] [through the streets],
[being defiled] with blood.
[so that no one there]would dare
[to brush up] [against their clothing].


נ 14 נָעוּ עִוְרִים בַּחוּצוֹת נְגֹאֲלוּ
בַּדָּם בְּלִי אֲשֶׁר יוּכְלוּ יִגְּעוּ
בִּלְבֻשֵׁיהֶם׃

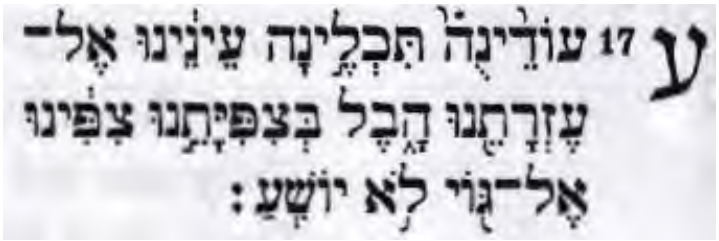
15 "Get away,[unclean one]!"
[were the cries] [of people to them].
"Keep away! [Do not touch us]!"
So they fled away,[and now wander].
People said [among the nations]:
"They may no longer sojourn here."


ס 15 סוּרוּ טָמֵא קָרְאוּ לָמוֹ סוּרוּ
סוּרוּ אַל־תִּגָּעוּ כִּי נָצוּ גַּם־
נָעוּ אָמְרוּ בַגּוֹיִם לֹא יוֹסִפוּ
לָגוּר׃

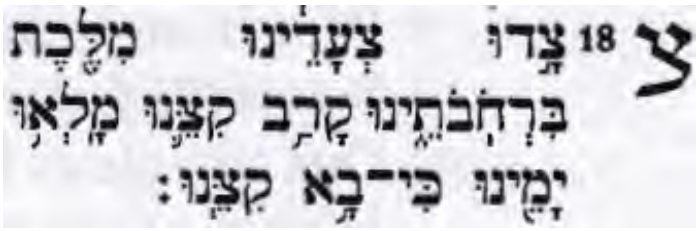
16 The face of God [has dispersed them].
He will no more,[give them a glance].
[They respected]the priests [no longer],
[paid no attention] to the prophets.

פ 16 פְּנֵי יְהוָה חִלְּקָם לֹא יוֹסִיף
לְהַבִּיטָם פְּנֵי כֹהֲנִים לֹא נָשָׂאוּ
זְקֵנִים לֹא חָנָנוּ׃

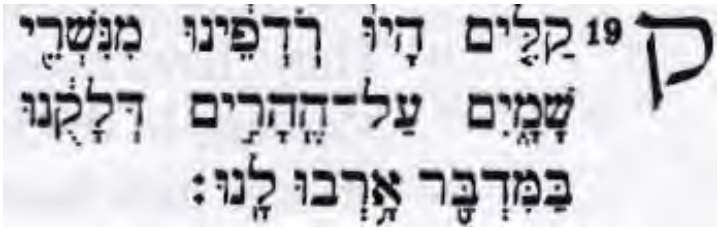
17 Our eyes are strained and failing,
[watching vainly] [for our deliverance].
We were watching[for a nation] [Egypt]
[that was never] there to save us.


ע 17 עוֹדֵינָה תִּכְלֶינָה עֵינֵינוּ אֶל־
עֶזְרָתֵנוּ הָבֶל בְּצִפִּיָּתֵנוּ צָפִינוּ
אֶל־גּוֹי לֹא יוֹשִׁעַ׃

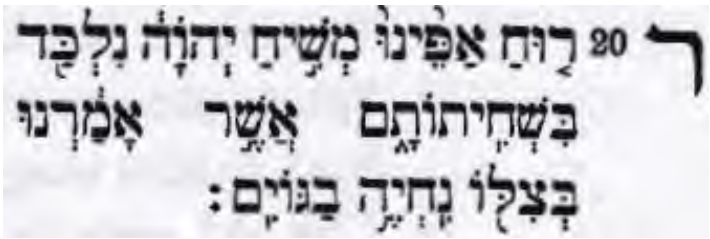
4:18 [Our enemies eyed]our steps,
[so we could not walk] [in our streets].
[Our doom] [is near]. Our days are over,
yea our end has come.


צ 18 צָדוּ צְעָדֵינוּ מִלֶּכֶת
בִּרְחֹבֹתֵינוּ קָרַב קִצֵּנוּ מָלְאוּ
יָמֵינוּ כִּי־בָא קִצֵּנוּ׃

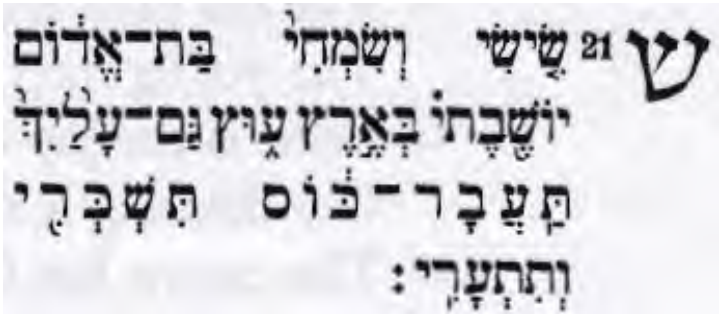
19 They[were swifter]—our pursuers—
[than the eagles] [in the sky].
[In the mountains], [they did hunt us],
[in the desert], laid in wait for us.

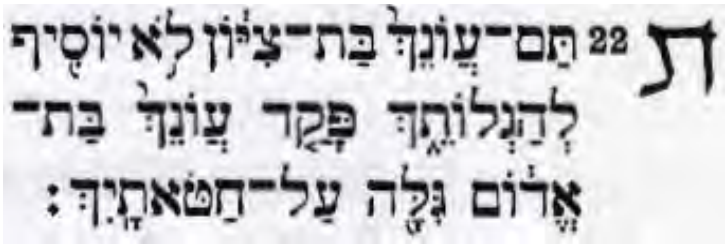

ק 19 קַלִּים הָיוּ רֹדְפֵינוּ מִנִּשְׁרֵי
שָׁמָיִם עַל־הֶהָרִים דִּלָּקְנוּ
בַּמִּדְבָּר אָרְבוּ לָנוּ׃

20 The breath[of our nostrils],
God's own anointed [King Josiah],
[our king was captured] [in their traps],
of whom[we had said],
"[Under his shadow],
we will live among the nations."


ר 20 רוּחַ אַפֵּינוּ מְשִׁיחַ יְהוָה נִלְכַּד
בְּשִׁחִיתוֹתָם אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְנוּ
בְּצִלּוֹ נִחְיֶה בַגּוֹיִם׃

21Rejoice and exult,
[daughter of Edom],
[you that dwell] in the land of Uz.
[To you, in turn] [the cup will pass].
[It will make you drunk];
[you will show your nakedness].


ש 21 שִׂישִׂי וְשִׂמְחִי בַּת־אֱדוֹם
יוֹשֶׁבְתִּי בְּאֶרֶץ עוּץ גַּם־עָלַיִךְ
תַּעֲבָר־כּוֹס תִּשְׁכְּרִי
וְתִתְעָרִי׃



4:22 [Your crime is atoned for],

[daughter of Zion].

He will no more send you

into captivity.

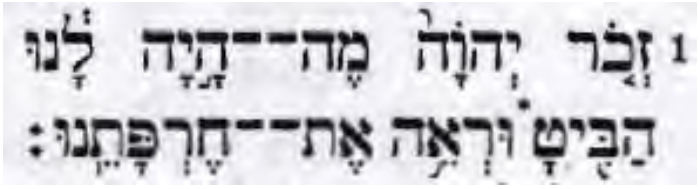
But daughter of Edom,

[your guilt He will punish],

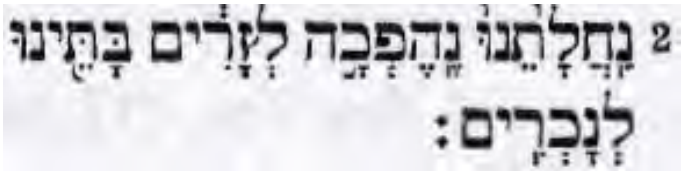
[your transgressions] [final melody]

[will be laid bare].

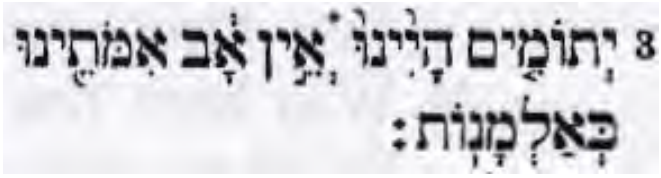
CHAPTER 5


1 זְכֹר יְהוָה מֶה־הָיָה לָנוּ
הַבִּיטָה וּרְאֵה אֶת־חֶרְפָּתֵנוּ׃

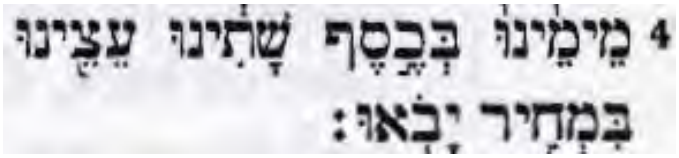
5:1 Recall, Adonai,
what [has befallen us].
Behold and see our disgrace.


2 נַחֲלָתֵנוּ נֶהֶפְכָה לְזָרִים בָּתֵּינוּ
לְנׇכְרִים׃

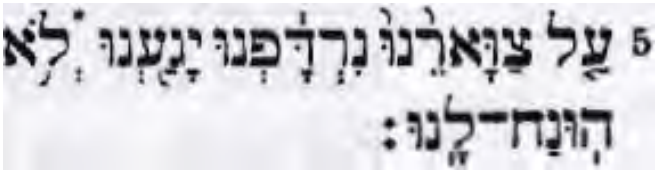
2 Our inheritance [turned over]
to strangers, [and our houses] unto aliens.


3 יְתוֹמִים הָיִינוּ אֵין אָב אִמּוֹתֵינוּ
כְּאַלְמָנוֹת׃

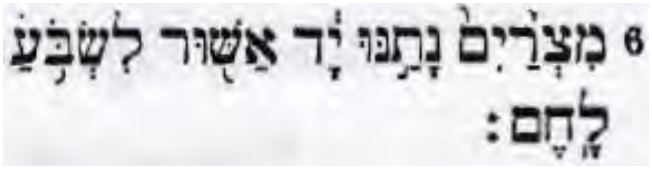
3 [We have become] like orphans.
There is no father.
[And our mothers] are as widows.


4 מֵימֵינוּ בְּכֶסֶף שָׁתִינוּ עֵצֵינוּ
בְּמִחִיר יָבֹאוּ׃

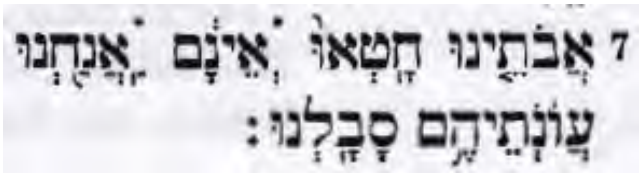
4 [Our own water]—
we pay money [to drink it].
[And our firewood] we get for a price.


5 עַל צַוָּארֵנוּ נִרְדָּפְנוּ יָגַעְנוּ לֹא
הוּנַח־לָנוּ׃

5 [To our very] necks, [we are pursued].
We labor, but nothing is left to us.


6 מִצְרַיִם נָתַנּוּ יָד אַשּׁוּר לִשְׂבֹּעַ
לָחֶם׃

6 To Egypt [we stretched out] a hand,
[and to Assyria],
just to get enough bread.


7 אֲבֹתֵינוּ חָטְאוּ אֵינָם וַאֲנַחְנוּ
עֲוֹנֹתֵיהֶם סָבָלְנוּ׃

7 Our fathers have sinned,
[and are no more].
[We have all suffered]
for their iniquities.

5:8 Slaves ruled[over us].
[There is none to deliver us]
from their hand.

8 עֲבָדִים מָשָׁלוּ בָּנוּ פֹּרֵק אֵין
מִיָּדָם׃

9 At the risk[of our lives],
we get our bread,
[because of the sword] of the wilderness.

9 בְּנַפְשֵׁנוּ נָבִיא לַחְמֵנוּ מִפְּנֵי
חֶרֶב הַמִּדְבָּר׃

10 Our skin is hot[like a furnace].
[because of] the burning heat of famine.

10 עוֹרֵנוּ כְּתַנּוּר נִכְמָרוּ מִפְּנֵי
זַלְעֲפוֹת רָעָב׃

11 The women in Zion were ravaged,
the maidens in the towns of Judah.

11 נָשִׁים בְּצִיּוֹן עִנּוּ בְּתֻלֹת בְּעָרֵי
יְהוּדָה׃

12 The leaders [have been hanged]
[by their hands].
The faces of elders [are not respected].

12 שָׂרִים בְּיָדָם נִתְלוּ פְּנֵי זְקֵנִים
לֹא נֶהְדָּרוּ׃

13 [Young men]carry a millstone.
[And children stagger]
under loads of wood.

13 בָּחוּרִים טְחוֹן נָשָׂאוּ וּנְעָרִים
בָּעֵץ כָּשָׁלוּ׃

14 The elders are gone[from the gate],
[the young men] [from their music].

14 זְקֵנִים מִשַּׁעַר שָׁבָתוּ בָּחוּרִים
מִנְּגִינָתָם׃

5:15 The joy[in our hearts]has vanished,
our dancing [has turned into mourning].

15 שָׁבַת מְשׂוֹשׂ לִבֵּנוּ נֶהְפַּךְ לְאֵבֶל
מְחוֹלֵנוּ׃

16 [The crown has fallen]
from our heads.
Woe to us, for we have sinned.

16 נָפְלָה עֲטֶרֶת רֹאשֵׁנוּ אוֹי־
נָא לָנוּ כִּי חָטָאנוּ׃

17 [Because of this], our hearts
are sickened.
[This is why] our eyes grow dim.

17 עַל־זֶה הָיָה דָוֶה לִבֵּנוּ עַל־
אֵלֶּה חָשְׁכוּ עֵינֵינוּ׃

18 [For the mountain]of Zion,
[which lies desolate],
[while the foxes] [prowl over it].

18 עַל הַר־צִיּוֹן שֶׁשָּׁמֵם שׁוּעָלִים
הָלְכוּ־בוֹ׃

19 Yet You Adonai will sit forever
[upon Your throne],
through all generations.

19 אַתָּה יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תֵּשֵׁב
כִּסְאֲךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר׃

20 [You cannot mean] [to forget us]
forever,[and forsake us] [for all time]?

20 לָמָּה לָנֶצַח תִּשְׁכָּחֵנוּ תַּעַזְבֵנוּ
לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים׃

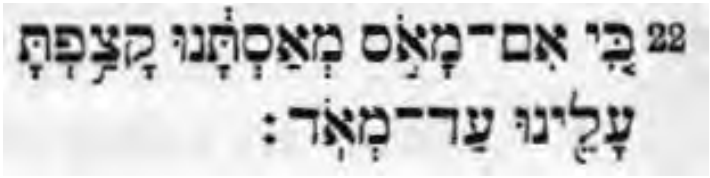
21[Turn us back] [to Yourself God],
[and we shall return].
Renew our days as of old.

21 הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ יְהוָה | אֵלֶיךָ וְנָשׁוּבָה
חַדֵּשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם׃

5:22 [You can't]

[have rejected us] utterly.

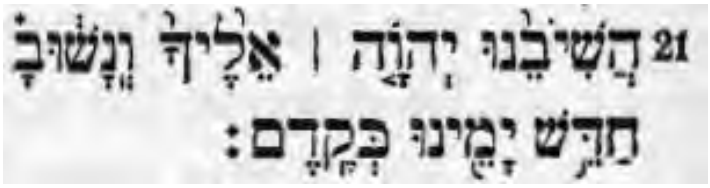
You have raged against us, it is enough.



21 [Turn us back] [to Yourself God],

[and we shall return].

[final melody] Renew our days as of old.



This version of Lamentations has been prepared by drawing on the following translations:
The Stone Edition Tanach, JPS, H.L. Ginsberg, David Seidenberg,
James Moffat, Jerusalem Bible, New King James Bible

The trope melodies I used were taken from the book:

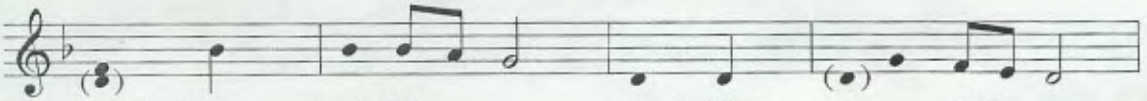
CHANTING THE HEBREW BIBLE (1st edn.) by Joshua R. Jacobson.

Chapter 3 of Lamentations is sung by singing each set of three verses to three melodies, in turn. I grouped each set of three verses together, as in 1-3, 4-6, etc. The first two of the three melodies end their first half (the "half-cadence") with a high note, and the third with a "falling tone". I have marked the corresponding syllable with an arrow:

↗ for the high note or half-cadence of the first melody, ↑ for the high note of the second melody, and ↘ for the "falling tone" of the third melody.

11. Summary of the *Te'amim*

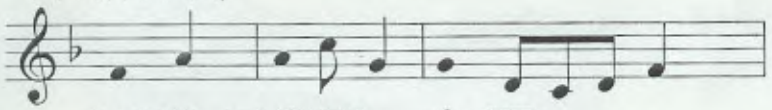
מֵרְכָא טִפְחָא מוּנַח אֶתְנַחְתָּא מֵרְכָא טִפְחָא מֵרְכָא סִילּוּק



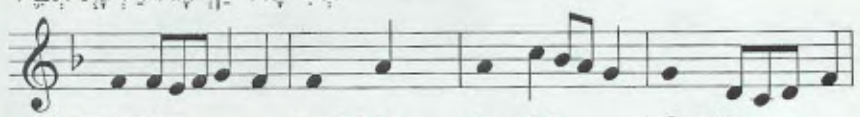
mé - r^{e}- KHA tip-p^{e} -ḤA ____ mé-r^{e}- KHA sí - LUK___

mé - r^{e} - KHA tip -p^{e} -ḤA ____ mu - NAḤ 'et - naḥ - TA ___

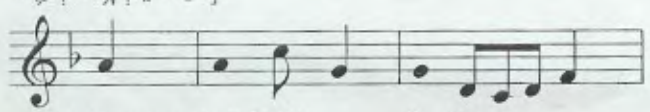
קַדְמָה מֵרְכָא תְּבִיר



kad-MA mé-r^{e}-KHA__ t^{e} - VIR _____

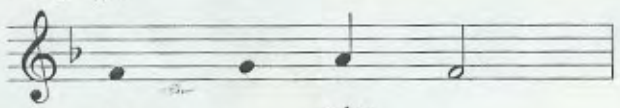
תְּלִישָׁה קַדְמָה דַּרְגָּא תְּבִיר

t^{e}-lí-SHA___ kad-MA dar-GA __ t^{e} - VIR ____

מֻנַח מֵרְכָא תְּבִיר



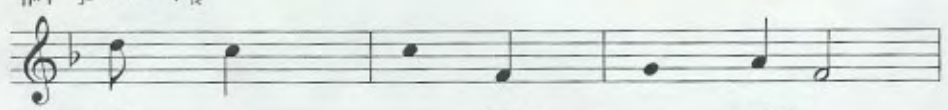
MU-naḥ mé-r^{e}-KHA __ t^{e} - VIR ____

זָקֵף־גָּדוֹל

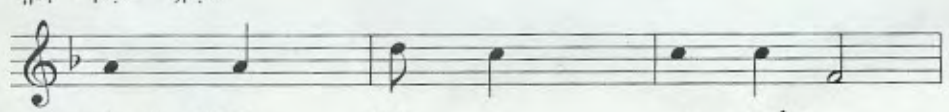


za - KÉF _____

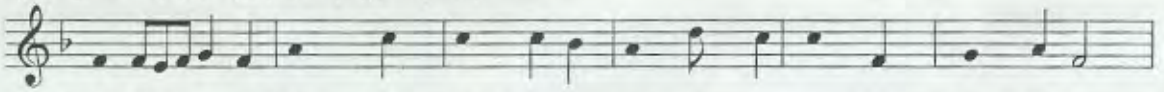
יְתִיב מוּנַח זָקֵף



TÍV _____ mu - NAḤ za - KÉF ___

מֵרְכָא פַּשְׁטָא זָקֵף

mé - r^{e} - KHA TA ___ za - KÉF __

תְּלִישָׁה קַדְמָה מַהְפֵּךְ פַּשְׁטָא מוּנַח זָקֵף

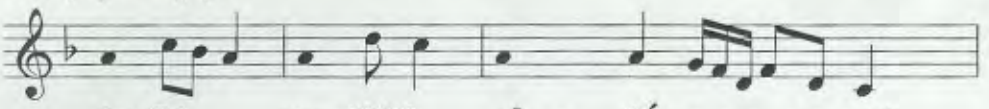


t^{e}-lí-SHA ____ kad - MA mah-PAKH_ pash-TA ___ mu - NAḤ za - KÉF__

מוּנַח זַרְקָא מוּנַח סְגוֹל

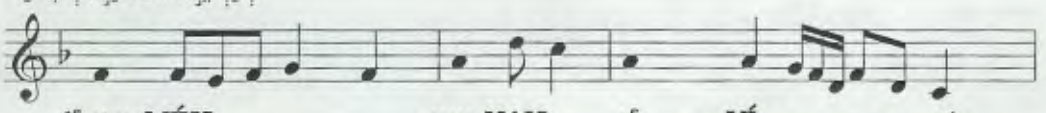
mu-NAḤ zar-KA_____ mu - NAḤ se - GÓL __

דַּרְגָּא מוּנַח רְבִיעַ



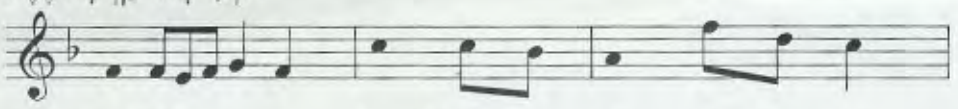
dar-GA ___ mu - NAḤ_ r^{e} - VÍ - - - - - - - a'

לְגַרְמֵהּ | מוּנַח רְבִיעַ

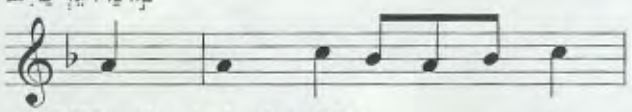


l^{e}-gar-MÉH _____ mu-NAḤ_ r^{e} - VÍ - - - a'

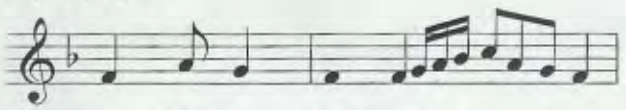
תְּלִישָׁה קַדְמָה גֵּרֵשׁ



t^{e} -lí - SHA _____ kad- MA ___ (v^{e}) - GE - - resh

מוּנַח גֵּרְשַׁיִם

MU-naḥ gé-r^{e} -sha-YIM _____

מוּנַח תְּלִישָׁה

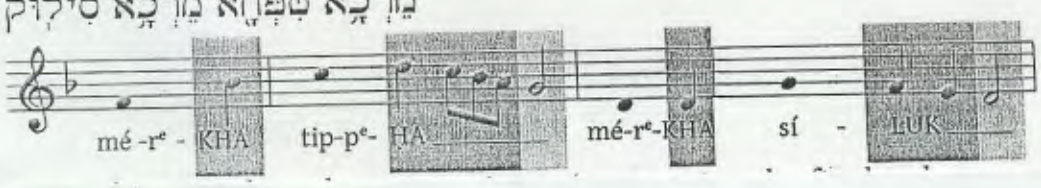


mu - NAḤ __ t^{e} - lí - SHA _____

The Final Cadence

We use a special melody to signal the ending of each chapter of Lamentations. This melody is applied at the final (*merekha-*) *tippeḥa* segment. You'll chant this cadence slowly. This special cadence is not applied to chapter three, which is chanted to a completely different melody (see p. 107).

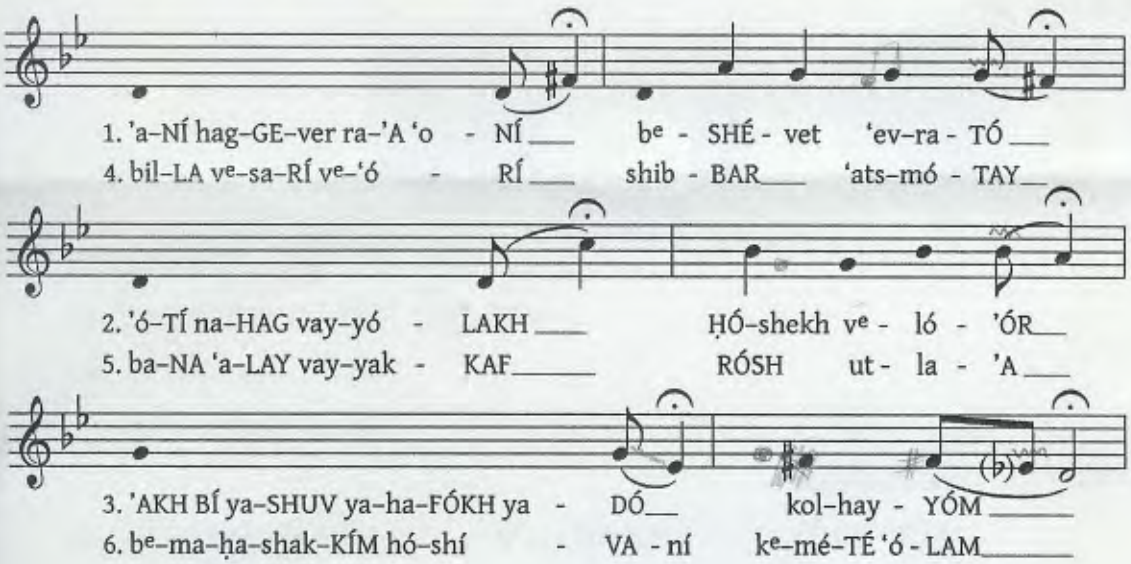
מֵרְכָא טִפְחָא מֵרְכָא סִילּוּק



mé -r^{e} - KHA tip-p^{e}- HA mé-r^{e}-KHA sí - LUK

Chanting Chapter Three

The third chapter of Lamentations, consisting of 66 short verses, is not cantillated according to the *te'amim*. Instead, it is chanted to a special melody that combines every three verses into one strophe of melody. The half-cadence of each line of the strophe (indicated by the first fermata of each line) is chanted on the first word marked with *zakef* (or, if there is no *zakef*, *tippeḥa*).

Hear the chanting of chapter three on CD track 87.

1. 'a-NÍ hag-GE-ver ra-'A 'o - NÍ be - SHÉ - vet 'ev-ra - TÓ
4. bil-LA ve-sa-RÍ ve-'ó - RÍ shib - BAR 'ats-mó - TAY
2. 'ó-TÍ na-HAG vay-yó - LAKH ḤÓ-shekh ve - ló - 'ÓR
5. ba-NA 'a-LAY vay-yak - KAF RÓSH ut - la - 'A
3. 'AKH BÍ ya-SHUV ya-ha-FÓKH ya - DÓ kol-hay - YÓM
6. be-ma-ḥa-shak-KÍM hó-shí - VA - ní ke-mé-TÉ 'ó - LAM

(3:1) אֲנִי הַגֶּבֶר רָאָה עֳנִי בְּשֵׁבֶט עֶבְרָתוֹ׃

(3:2) אוֹתִי נָהַג וַיֹּלַךְ חֹשֶׁךְ וְלֹא־אוֹר׃

(3:3) אַךְ בִּי יָשֹׁב יַהֲפֹךְ יָדוֹ כָּל־הַיּוֹם׃

(3:4) בִּלָּה בְשָׂרִי וְעוֹרִי שִׁבַּר עַצְמוֹתָי׃

(3:5) בָּנָה עָלַי וַיַּקַּף רֹאשׁ וּתְלָאָה׃

(3:6) בְּמַחֲשַׁכִּים הוֹשִׁיבַנִי כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם׃

Len Fellman's English readings with tropes

The purpose of this project is to translate *THE SONG OF THE TORAH* into English.

I work by comparing as many as ten English translations of a *pasuk* and creating a cantillated English sentence that sounds as much as possible like the Hebrew. They follow the Hebrew as closely as possible, word for word and trope by trope. The English language has an amazing flexibility, making it possible to make the English word order match that of the Hebrew quite well, allowing for some "poetic licence", and some willingness on the part of the listener to be "carried" by the melody more than by the English syntax. The translation needs to sound good when *chanted*, but not necessarily when *spoken or read*.

Unlike most translations, these "transtropilations" are not intended to be a substitute for the Hebrew. On the contrary, they are meant to provide a "window" into the Hebrew text and its musical expression. My ideal listener knows enough Hebrew and has enough interest to follow the Hebrew in a bilingual text while the *leyner* is chanting the English version, to bring the Hebrew text to life, both *verbally* and *musically*. For this purpose I use *exactly* the same tropes in the English as in the Hebrew (almost always on the corresponding English word).

The texts can be used to do **consecutive translation**, i.e. leyning a phrase in Hebrew, followed by the corresponding phrase sung in English. Some of my recordings demonstrate this. I do this frequently when leyning for groups that either know little Hebrew, or that don't have a *chumash* in front of them.

I favor literal translations (e.g. "cut a covenant") to call attention to Hebrew idioms, and towards simpler (even if less accurate) words (e.g. Ex. 12:7 "beam above the door" rather than "lintel") to be easier to follow. If my readings provoke a discussion of the Hebrew, I consider that as justification for using less-than-idiomatic English. I try to find just the right balance between "literalness" and "listenable-ness". A primary goal is throwing light on the Hebrew syntax.

In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the trope symbols:

mercha tipcha munach tevir mapakh *or* yetiv kadma *or* pashta geresh gershayim telisha katana telisha gedola

(Generally speaking the *conjunctive tropes* such as mercha, munach, mapakh, kadma, and telisha katana "lean toward" the words they "conjoin" to, while the *disjunctive tropes* such as tipcha, geresh, gershayim, and telisha gedola "lean away" from the words that follow, so as to create a sense of separation.)

The trope symbol is normally placed under the accented syllable, unless it is a *pre-positive* accent (telisha gedola, placed *at the beginning* of the word or phrase) or a *post-positive* one (telisha katana or pashta, placed at the *end* of the word or phrase).

The Hebrew text frequently puts a *makkeph* (which is like a hyphen) between words in order to treat them as a single word to be chanted. I use a different system for English: If an entire English phrase is to be chanted to a single trope melody, I place it between grey brackets, as in this phrase from the Book of Lamentations:

[clings to her skirts]

The *leyner* is invited to fit this phrase to the *Eicha* "rivi'i" melody in whatever way seems most natural.

As a variant of the "grey bracket" device, I indicate the following pairs of tropes by "wrapping them around" the phrase which will have the combined melody:

mercha/tipcha	kadma/geresh (*or*: azla, etc.)	mercha siluk
(Renew our days)	(She weeps bitterly).	(a fire-offering to God)

Again, the *leyner* should decide on the most natural way to fit the phrase to the combined trope melody.

I put words in gray which I consider essential but which don't strictly match the Hebrew. I also "pad" some phrases with extra words in gray to fill out a musical phrase nicely. Different trope systems vary widely in the length of the musical phrase used, so the words in gray may or not be used depending on the leyner's cantillation system. In particular, the tropes *telisha g'dola* (֠), *legarmeh*, *metigah-zakef*, and *pazer* vary widely in the muscial phrases used for chanting. (And please indulge me in my whimsical treatments of *shalshelet*.)

"*Metigah-zakef*"is a special trope combination which can be recognized by a kadma and a zakef katon appearing on the same Hebrew word (again, a *makkeph* makes two words into one). (There are several examples in Genesis 18 & 19, beginning with 18:16). I indicate this by placing the corresponding English phrase in grey brackets:

[Take heed—take care for yourself]

In some trope systems (notably cantor Moshe Haschel in "Navigating the Bible II") this is given a very distinctive melody—for which purpose extra syllables fill out the musical phrase (as in "take care" in this example). Haschel's system also chants the trope *munach* as *legarmeh* more often than other systems do.

I don't write a single word of translation without first hearing the melody of the phrase in my mind, following one of two trope systems: The one by Portnoy and Wolff (*The Art of Cantillation*) or the one by Joshua R. Jacobson (*Chanting the Hebrew Bible*).

I transcribe the name יהוה as YHWH (in small caps). I almost always chant this as *yud-hey-vav-hey*, which I have discovered fits marvelously into several of the trope melodies. But of course the leyner can choose to pronounce it as "*God*" or "*Adonai*".

The English translations I mostly use (besides several scholarly commentaries) are the following:

Aryeh Kaplan, 'The Living Torah' (1981) (also my source for proper names & transliterations)
Richard Elliott Friedman, 'The Bible With Sources Revealed' (2003)
Everett Fox, 'The Five Books of Moses' (1997)
The Stone Edition 'Tanach' (1996)
JPS 'Hebrew-English Tanach', (2nd Ed. 2000), *along with* Orlinsky, 'Notes on the New Translation of the Torah' (1969)
Robert Alter, 'The Five Books of Moses' (2004)
Commentaries in the 'Anchor Bible' series
Rotherham, The Emphasized Bible (1902)
The Jerusalem Bible (1966) (also my source for topic headings)
The New King James Bible (1982)